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THE HOUSE ON THE HILL-TOP.

A TALE OF MODERN ETRURIA.

By Grace Ellery Channing.

GIULIA, bent over her machine, pulled the threads with flying fingers. Outside the sun beat straight down on the stone steps and the stones of the little court in which the steep road ended. "*Sole di Maggio,*" murmured the peasants going up and down the hill, in the same tone of warning with which they had said "*Sole d' Aprile*" a month before, and would say "*Sole di Jugnio*" a month later.

It was not yet seven o'clock in the morning, but Giulia had long ago eaten her wedge of black bread which Assunta cut from the huge loaf for all of them—'Tonio, Delia, Gemma, and herself—and ever since her fingers had flown without pausing. She had not stopped to look up when Gemma, coughing and shivering in the hot sunshine, passed her on her way to the *fabbrica;* nor, when 'Tonio, bent double with rheumatism, limped painfully down the hill. The little household worked always, but nowadays Giulia was the most industrious of them all, and had her frame drawn to the doorway to catch the light and busily clicking before even Delia sat down to the pile of straw which daily she converted into fans. Poor stupid Delia, who had had "fear of a dog" once in her youth, and fallen, and now was only good to be the household drudge and make fans all day long and every day. Her highest ambition was to make twenty fans daily; those large, round fans, which shut between two slender sticks, and have a rosette on either side. Sometimes she made only fifteen, but these were bad days.

Giulia wove the braided patterns for straw-hats, and Gemma at the factory made baskets, which the fine ladies who came up to Fiesole from Florence carried away on their arms. The father, 'Tonio, worked at carpentering, but he had been so long ill with rheumatism that he worked less, and never had there been so hard a winter, and never so little money as just now when there was such special need of it.

So Giulia's fingers flew, and she sat patiently all day at her frame. Delia no longer had to find fault with her waywardness, or scold her for running out into the bright sunshine the moment her back was turned, to jump about with Fuffi from sheer gayety. Fuffi disconsolately lay at her feet, or jumped by himself; for was she not about to "finish her thirteenth year," as they say in Tuscany, when they mean one will be fourteen years old—and was she not to take her First Communion in three weeks in the cathedral, together with eleven other girls and sixteen boys? Assuredly; and there was crying need of whole francs to be expended upon the dress and veil, without which she would never feel that she

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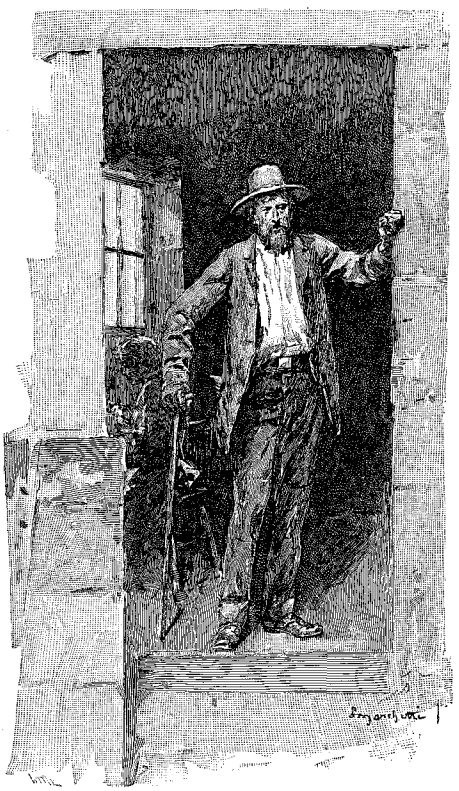
had properly been confirmed at all. For there are two indispensable, inexorable needs in a Tuscan maiden's life —a white gown and veil for the *prima communione* and a black gown for marriage. Everybody doesn't marry, but everybody—at least, if he be not an actual heathen—is confirmed at some time.

But when one has so much work to



'Tonio.

live, there is so little, little, to buy white gowns and veils with. The whole family had worked and planned willingly all winter that the *bambina* might not be disappointed, but the *bambina* herself must do her share.

Presently the mother came out, her black handkerchief with green strawberries stamped on it knotted, Tuscan fashion, about her plain, homely, energetic face, a clean blue apron tied about her waist, the faded purple skirt showing below and the dingy plaid waist above.

Assunta was in a hurry, as she always was; a Tuscan hurry, which is quite a different thing from a New England hurry, and has in it a good deal of aimless hither-and-thither running, and rapid idling with one's neighbor, compensated by more hasty rushing afterward. She stopped a moment, however, on her way for the Signorina's cream and butter, to look at Giulia's braid, and caution Delia against cutting too much bread for lunch — Assunta herself never lunched. She patted Giulia's shoulder:

"Work, work always, *bambina*, and who knows——" She finished with a smile and a nod.

Pretty Giulia started up and threw her arms about her mother eagerly.

"Oh, Mamina! do you think I can have the ribbon?"

"Who knows, *chi lo sa?*" replied Assunta, with mingled doubt and hope. Oh, how much she had thought about that ribbon herself!

"*Chi lo sa?*" she said again, hopefully.

At that moment Tesita came by—Tesita, on her way to Piazza San Domenico with her blind and one-armed father, there to beg of all the strangers. Just so they went by every day of the year, Tesita a little more ragged and dirty each day, and every day in the year Assunta eyed them with the same disfavor. Every day also Tesita and Giulia looked at one another. Giulia had been forbidden to have anything to do with her former playmate since Beppe lost his sight at the burning of the car-factory and Tesita had become a street-beggar—a "*niente di buona*," Assunta said, with grieved indignation. She was sorry for the *povero*, yes; but bring up a girl on the streets!—why didn't they teach her to weave straw instead? A girl who lives on the streets soon will not work, and when a girl will not work, what happens? "*Niente di buona*—no good." She knew very well, however, why they didn't teach her to make straw! He who begs makes three soldi, while he who works makes one! Assunta drew her lips together scornfully. Some people will do anything for money—yes, even sell their souls!

So Giulia and Tesita only eyed each

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other in silence each day. To-day Giulia sat up straighter.

"Wait until she sees my white gown and veil!" she thought, her heart already swelling with pride.

Tesita wrinkled her small nose scornfully. As if everyone in all Fiesole had not known for weeks that Assunta's Giulia was to make her first communion!

"Huh!" thought Tesita in her sinful little soul, "she thinks she's very big because she's going to wear a veil! and work, work, work all day for it! My Babbo could give me two veils if it pleased him. She needn't be so proud; wasn't my Babbo a Sant' Apostolo only last Holy Thursday?" A cloud passed over her impudently gay small face as she said it. For had not the priest taken that very proud occasion, when he paid the five francs to each holy apostle, to look hard at her (though she made herself as small as never was, behind the apostle's robe), and to say that she was really quite too large to be always on the street, and Beppe should begin to think of sending her for holy instruction, and confirming her; it was ill for a *ragazza* to run the streets at her age. And Beppe, still under the influence of his apostolic dignity and the clean stockings and linen robe he had worn for the occasion—perhaps of the five francs too—had talked seriously of taking rosy, blue-eyed Annina with him in future. Tesita had had all the trouble in the world to change his mind; she had had to remind him how beautifully she talked to the strangers, and how cleverly she arranged him on his knees in piteous postures, for Festas, before Beppe had relented and decided to risk the Father's displeasure yet a little longer. Since then Tesita had grown adroit in whisking Beppe round a corner whenever a black gown came in sight; not a difficult task to escape the easy-going, rotund Father.

Still, the evil day loomed in the future, and darkened Tesita's horizon at moments—when she saw Giulia especially. To leave off begging meant work—work, abhorred of Tesita's very soul, as only a creature of her untrammelled life could abhor it. True, it rained half the year at Fiesole, and the other half it blistered beneath the sun; and in rain and sun alike the wind blew, either whirling white dust in clouds, or driving sleet down one's throat and through one's clothes; but never mind! how far preferable one's freedom even so. To sit on stone walls, to curl up on the pavements or in the dust itself, and listen to the cabmen and *contadini* swearing and talking

At that moment Tesita came by.

volubly; to thrust out one's hand at the *Forestieri*, and rehearse one's plea: "*Signore, un poverino! Signorina,*

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un povero vecchietto!" before lame Ghigo or armless Gigi could get in a word—these were simple pleasures, but sufficing. Giulia, with her veils and her white gowns and her straw-work and her industry, made the soul of Tesita sick! She grunted audibly as she led Beppe by, and Assunta watched her with that compression of the lips which means disapproval, and said, as usual: "*Niente di buona!*" as she hurried after the Signorina's cream.

The stones of the road almost fitted themselves automatically to Assunta's feet, she had trodden them so often. Twenty-three years! Ever since she and 'Tonio went to housekeeping in that house on the utmost peak of Fiesole; a peak which embraced in vision all Val d' Arno and its watching mountains, and which now and then an enterprising tourist climbed to, for the view, and boasted of for weeks after. Assunta did not boast, however many times she plodded up and down daily. It had good air, "*buon aria*," she was fond of saying, and a "*bella vista;*" for Italian eyes can no more help being conscious of beauty than other eyes of bread and meat before them. But nowadays Assunta concerned herself little with the view. As she hastened down the hill she was busy calculating—she had been calculating for months past.

"Say so many lire for the waist, so many more for the skirt; say three lire for the making (the *sarta* said four, but that might be cut down to three); a lire for buttons and the like; four lire. Then stockings, and boots, and the veil, also ribbon." The folds in her forehead deepened at each item. "Also the *fornaio* must be paid this week, he said, for his daughter too makes her communion."

Assunta sighed; but for all her sighing she did not slacken her steps or forget the Signorina's cream and butter. The milkman's wife poured out the first into a wee glass flask and wrapped the second in dewy grape-leaves.

"They are good and fresh?" inquired Assunta, with that jealousy she always exhibited in her Signorina's interest.

"*If* they are fresh!" exclaimed the *sposa*, with reassuring enthusiasm. "And how stands it at your house, Assunta?" she added, condescendingly.

"As always; thanks."

"'Tonio goes to work?"

"As he can."

"And the Gemma?"

"Also the Gemma."

"And the *bambina* makes her communion?" said the sympathetic *sposa*.

A smile of pride dawned on Assunta's face.

"Yes, Madame."

"Ah!" exclaimed the *sposa's* husband, heartily, "that will be a *bella ragazza* some day!"

"And a good one," added his wife, reprovingly. "And the gown and veil?"

Assunta's face fell. "At this hour," she admitted reluctantly, "they do not find themselves."

"Ah!" said the *sposa*, sympathetically, "it has been a hard winter. Courage—they will be found."

"Let us hope so!" responded Assunta, fervently, appropriating the cream and butter, and departing with *so* many salutations, and "until we see each other again."

She continued down the hill, taking that winding Way which goes from where once loomed the mighty Etruscan citadel, past the gray walls of villas nodded over with pink roses, down to the city, and at every zigzag turn opens out to show you all Val d' Arno with Florence on its breast, lifting her towers and spires as thickly as the lilies she supplanted. It is a Way where one may see a ghost in every tree and pluck memories plenteously as the roses on the walls; but Assunta, Fiesolana born and bred, knew and cared nothing for that. What was it to her if the feet of all the Etruscan Lars, of all the legions of Hannibal and Cæsar, of eager Catiline's followers, of the entire riotous Florentine nobility had preceded hers over these roads? What should it be to her that once a slender Mantuan scholar, with bent brows beneath the hood, paced here as every day of her life she saw the Frati doing?—or that a gay idler with the Decameronian chaplet about his head had strayed hither? Truly,

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nothing. She passed straight under the shadow of Lorenzo's villa and did not lift her eyes.

"Seven lire—it could scarce be less—and boots and stockings—to say nothing of the ribbon for the garland. *Dio* will that 'Tonio may keep about, and Gemma, it might yet be possible then. And who knows but the Signorina will have errands in the city."

Assunta's heart smote her a little even at the wish. They were the only things she had on her conscience toward the Signorina—those trips to town. She had never been rightly able to satisfy herself that when the Signorina despatched her in haste for something, she was quite fair to the Signorina to take her tram-fare and walk the six miles to town and back. And the fact that the Signorina was none the wiser (for she found no fault, merely looked a little impatient and said "*Va bene!*" or some such phrase in her singular Italian) only half soothed her conscience. But, what would you?—when times are so hard, to let an honest soldo pass you was little less than wicked; and the Virgin knew she never took a centesimo from the Signorina in all the marketing, though the Signorina hardly glanced at the change if she had a pen in her hand—as she usually did. Still, it was with a shadow of compunction that she opened the gate of the villa and hurried upstairs.

The Signorina greeted her with the cordiality of one who has been impatiently waiting for breakfast a long time, and she poured the cream into her coffee and buttered her roll and began in a preoccupied way to eat it without her usual inquiries for the household on the hill; for the Signorina was anxious and troubled about many things.

She had been casting up her accounts—never a good thing to do before breakfast—and had decided that beggary was near at hand. Not being born to it—like Tesita—the prospect depressed her spirits. Editors, she concluded, were a worthless set, and literature a profitless profession. Any number of unpleasant facts stared her in the face. Decidedly she must give up the new summer hat and patronize second-best dressmakers—and the Signorina hated second-best things on principle as well as by instinct. The charming hem-stitched linen which the *ricamitrice* made for almost nothing must also be renounced—the Signorina looked disgustedly at the plain cloth on the table—and all like frivolous indulgences must be denied. She began to think, too, that she must make a rule of visiting the galleries on free days—a practice particularly abhorrent to the Signorina, whom Nature had

Assunta's heart smote her a little even at the wish.

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so framed that she never felt a desire to look at a picture on Sundays but hungered and thirsted after them on Saturdays and Mondays. She was so troubled at all these things that she did not look up until Assunta had twice said "Signorina!" in an accent of reproach.

Assunta fell on her knees before it.—Page 144.

"The Signorina is very naughty (*molto cattiva*)," said Assunta the third time. "She slept again with her window open."

"I have told you fifty times, Assunta," responded the Signorina, listlessly, "that I can't sleep at all without."

"And therefore the Signorina is *pallidissima* this morning," went on Assunta, calmly. "And it is bad for the eyes."

The Signorina opened hers widely.

"Nonsense; when there isn't a ray of light—not so much as a firefly."

"And now the Signorina eats nothing. Eat, eat, Signorina, and fatten."

Thus adjured, as she was three times a day, the Signorina—nowise remarkable for pallor or emaciation among her pallid countrywomen, but who, since she came to Italy, had often been made to feel that she was created in the image of a tallow-candle—made an effort to swallow the other half of her roll.

"How is your husband to-day, Assunta?" she asked, with languid interest.

"Badly, badly, Signorina," answered Assunta, cheerfully, cutting bread. "Poverino!—when he goes to work he walks so." She dramatically doubled herself up and limped a few steps, then, straightening up, pushed the butter toward the Signorina, saying cheerily: "Eat, eat, Signorina *mia*."

"Goes to work?" echoed the Signorina, "but he has been in bed for weeks; how can he work?"

Assunta shrugged her shoulders.

"What would you? There were but two lire left remaining when we paid the *fornaio* Saturday, and the Signorina knows two lire is little for five persons."

"But there is always the straw-work?"

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"Truly, yes (the Signorina is not eating)—there is the straw-work," assented Assunta. "Yesterday the Delia made twenty fans."

"Twenty fans! that must be a long day's work, Assunta?"

"From six to eight — every, *every*, EVERY minute, Signorina."

"Dear me!" thought the Signorina, "*I* should like to make twenty fans a day—and sell them! How much does she get for a fan, Assunta?"

"A centesimo, Signorina."

The Signorina, with a spoonful of coffee at her lips, dropped it.

"A centesimo!" she repeated.

"What misfortune!" ejaculated Assunta, hastily wiping up the coffee.

While she did so the unmathematical Signorina made a hasty calculation. A centesimo is the fifth of a cent; twenty centesimi are four cents; then if one works "every, *every*, EVERY minute" for fourteen hours one may live to make four cents a day. "And the fans sell for a franc and a half or two francs apiece; *worse than literature!*" concluded the Signorina grimly to herself.

"It is not much," said Assunta, serenely, "but what would you? The *fabbricante* makes all. The Giulia, however," she went on, encouragingly, "can now make from eight to ten arms of braid a day, and receives twenty-five centesimi for fourteen arms."

"And Gemma?" suggested the Signorina, faintly.

"The Gemma makes three francs a week at the *fabbrica*, but—*poverina!*—she is always ill. The Signorina has eaten nothing!"

The Signorina turned at the door of her room.

"And the gown for the first Communion, Assunta?" she asked.

Assunta clasped her hands.

"*Chi lo sa!*—it does not find itself—as yet."

"And the veil, the ribbon?"

Assunta's face faded still more.

"The veil—and the ribbon—also the boots—do not find themselves either, Signorina," she replied, despondently.

The Signorina looked at the downcast countenance.

"Never mind!" she said, encouragingly. "I daresay they will, and, by and by, could you go to the city for me?"

"Willingly, Signorina!" responded Assunta, with alacrity; and as she spoke her heart smote her.

It smote her again when she stood in the Piazza San Domenico with the Signorina's franc in her hand. It would cost her eighty centimes to go and return, and the Signorina was wont to bestow the remaining twenty on her. The sun was at white heat; there stood the tram on one side, and on the other the winding Way of Boccacio, three miles of it, between stone walls which gathered the heat and reflected it straight to the lime-dust of the road. She hesitated; beholding on the one hand her waiting Signorina, who could do no more work without paper, and on the other the metre and a half of ribbon which might be bought for eighty centimes.

"It is a sin to waste it and I will run every step of the way!" she thought, and set hastily off down the burning road.

"*Ecco*, Signorina!" she exclaimed, hours later, depositing a heavy package on the table before which the Signorina, in the thinnest of cool, white muslins, sat, feeling life a burden. She glanced at her messenger's purple face but said nothing.

"How it is cool and fresh here!" remarked Assunta, easily, "but in those trams, *Dio mio*, what a heat! Here are the twenty centesimi." The Signorina pushed them silently back.

"Thank you," she said, gently.

"*Dio mio!*" moaned Assunta to herself as she toiled up the hill, "*Dio mio! Dio mio!*" She said it all the way until she came in sight of the little house on the hill-top, and Giulia bending over the frame, her cheeks pale with the long, hot day's work.

Then Assunta's eyes brightened.

"*Guarda*, Giulia!" she exclaimed, joyously, holding up her franc, "the ribbon finds itself!"

Giulia, with a cry of delight, threw her arms about her; and the last sting of remorse vanished at that touch.

"I ran all the way," she said to herself, justifyingly.

"Gemma, oh, Gemma!" cried Giulia,

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darting to greet her as she dragged up the steps, and dancing about her. "The ribbon finds itself!"

She stopped short, perceiving Tesita, hot and dirty from a day's lolling in the dust, but with many soldi in her —or rather Beppe's — pocket. Tesita heard.

"Huh!" she said to herself, contemptuously. "Now she's got her old ribbon!"

Not for anything in the world would Tesita have admitted to herself a pang of envy.

"Huh!" she said again, scornfully.

Assunta, smiling still with exultation and beginning to fan the fire for the *minestra*, paused to shake her head and murmur, as usual:

"*Niente di buona!*"

. . . . . .

"*Dio mio!*" Assunta said it often, in the intervening weeks, as the days dragged along, loaded with calamities.

"*Dio mio!*" She said it very often.

First 'Tonio took to his bed, doubled up with rheumatism so that it was no longer possible to sit up—much less work. And instead of ten francs a week —"and he has been known to make as much as fourteen," said Assunta, with sad pride — there was nothing at all. And then—as if there were no reason in anything—his stomach refused the good food, bread and *minestra*, such as he had eaten every day of his life, except such days as they had not been able to afford the *minestra*, when he ate the bread alone.

"Seven pounds and a half of bread and half a kilo of *minestra* every day," said Assunta, "and the bread a whole franc! The Signorina sees, what with a bit of *carbone* to cook the *minestra* and a drop of *petrolio* to work by nights, and the rent, it is not possible to live on much less than twelve francs, or even fourteen, a week."

The Signorina, grown expert in doing many little sums lately, computed rapidly: fourteen francs a week; one hundred and forty-five dollars a year; divide by five—twenty-nine dollars a year apiece; divide by twelve—two dollars and forty cents a month apiece. No, she did not find it unreasonable.

"But we must all work," said Assunta, "and if 'Tonio cannot eat he cannot work, and if he cannot eat good bread——!" she looked as if divided between compassion and impatience.

The Signorina was no longer surprised at anything—even 'Tonio's unreason.

"*Buon giorno*, Signorina; has she slept well?" always greeted her ears, in the same tone of unvarying, cheerful interest, each morning. Assunta might have a trouble or two at heart, but who was she that she should bring her clouds into the Signorina's atmosphere? It was not until the Signorina herself, in the pauses of her type-writing or her writing, looked up and asked specific questions, that she extracted such news as there was.

"Yes, 'Tonio had taken to his bed again," or "Gemma had again an abscess" (for people will even have afflictions that are not pretty or pleasing); but "*pazienza!* what would you?"

There was, in truth, a trouble at Assunta's heart. It was not the sickness —that she had known before. It was not the lacking *minestra* nor the bread falling short — these she had lived through before; but a First Communion can neither be given up nor postponed. It represented all the *festas* of a girl's lifetime in one, and its robe took the place of a society belle's hundred party-gowns. Gemma had taken her Communion three years before, and the *bambina*—what a misery it would be if she should miss it! The *bambina* was working day in and out, and Delia made her score of fans nearly every day; but what with the baker, and now a plaster for 'Tonio and another for Gemma, and no wages—it was a desperate outlook for the gown. Assunta shut her eyes to it and went ahead.

What she did and didn't do those weeks, no one but herself precisely knew. The Signorina grew accustomed to seeing her arrive breathlessly, with the butter and cream and an apology—she had had a bit to do, or an errand to run, and the Signorina would graciously "have patience." Or late in the evenings, when she had (presumably) been at home for hours, the Signorina strolling in the ilex-walks would hear

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a cheery "Good-evening, Signorina! a pleasant walk!" and behold her late servitor up to her elbows in the stone washing-trough, or ironing for dear life on a table set in the shrine beneath the life-size Crucifixion.

Once in a while—but rarely—the Signorina let fall some commiserating word.

"What would you?" was the invariable reply, accompanied by a shrug; "I have never been less poor, Signorina."

But as the days passed, bringing nothing but more debt and less hope, Assunta clasped her hands and dropped more than one tear upon that ironing-table, while she fervently implored the saints and Madonna for aid. The Madonna herself ought to take an interest in it, for surely she couldn't want Giulia to march in her procession wearing things so shabby that they could only be characterized by ending them in a scornful "*accio*," "*scarpaccio*," and the like.

Whether the Madonna took this view of it or not, one day Assunta fairly flew upstairs and announced joyfully:

"Signorina! Signorina! the veil finds itself!"

The Signorina dropped her pen and clapped her hands.

"It is most beautiful—and a gift!" Assunta continued, ecstatically. "So large and also long and beautiful—beautiful, Signorina!"

It is true, if dark clouds have silver linings, silver clouds have dark ones as often; the next morning Gemma coughed blood. Assunta's voice broke as she told it, and she wrung her hands passionately for a moment. "*Dio mio!* if it should be—all her father's people went so! *Che passione!*"

The Signorina looked helplessly about her—

"But Giulia is well," she said, "and Delia is never ill."

A shadow crossed Assunta's face.

"No danger!" she said, briefly, with the only approach to bitterness the Signorina ever heard.

Poor, homely, stupid Delia! the only one of the three always well and robust. While pretty Gemma——

The Signorina tried again; she too had coughed blood, but I hardly think her physicians would have recognized her case from her description. She was very eloquent over it. When she had finished Assunta regarded her respectfully, as a miracle, and the Signorina felt a little like a miracle herself. According to her it was less than nothing, if it were not indeed a healthy symptom, to cough blood; all the long-lived people she was able to remember had coughed for many years. One could argue nothing from a trifle of that kind. Assunta was more than consoled.

"And the Signorina slept again with her window open!" she remarked, catching sight of it as she wiped away the last tear. "How naughty she is! And the veil, Signorina, you should see how it is beautiful!" she added, gayly from the threshold, as she went.

The Signorina leaned back in her chair, deeply conscious that she had been making an idiot of herself.

"*Cosa vuole*—what would you?" she said to herself in Assunta's extenuating phrase, a little palely.

She was so tired that she underwent a revulsion later, and was glad when Assunta brought in strawberries for her to look at, and she could survey them discontentedly and find them poor, and dear at the price.

Assunta agreed that they ought to be far finer for the Signorina, and suggested that it might be well for her to go in search of others at Fiesole—or even to the city.

Which brought the Signorina to her senses.

. . . . . .

"This is my *festa*, Assunta," said the Signorina, looking up from the pile of birthday letters and gifts on her table.

Assunta, with a copper water-jar in either hand, stopped short.

"Truly, Signorina! it is also mine!" she exclaimed. "And how many years has the Signorina?" she asked, with interest.

"Twenty-eight."

The copper jars went down to the floor.

"Truly! How well the Signorina carries them!"

The Signorina, who never before had realized her antiquity, felt actually abashed.

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"And how many years have you, Assunta?" she asked.

"I finish forty, Signorina."

In her turn the Signorina stared; twelve years only between herself and the worn, wrinkled, thin-haired, almost toothless woman before her.

"Yes, Signorina," went on Assunta, tranquilly. "Forty years ago my mother put me in the world. I was born on the roadside, the Signorina remembers, and she carried me home in her apron, so!" gathering up her blue apron to illustrate. Then letting it fall again: "And the Signorina has twenty-eight years! Who would believe it?"

"I think I should like some very nice strawberries for my *festa*—if you can go to the city for me," said the Signorina, to change the subject.

"Signorina, I am here to obey you," replied Assunta, gravely, in spite of her inward emotion. A whole franc toward the boots!

And while she was hurrying down the hill and over the white road, the Signorina, in the midst of her pretty gifts and the pleasant mood they awakened, was experiencing an unwonted fit of benevolence.

"Poor Assunta!" she thought, "I should like to give her something for her *festa*—if I were not so poor;" and she fell to wondering what in all the world Assunta would best like to have. Not that edition of Shelley, surely, which had made her own eyes sparkle with delight, nor yet the dainty linen worked by dear hands; Assunta wanted nothing for herself.

"I know!" thought the Signorina, with conviction.

She went into her room and sitting down before her bureau, drew out one by one the fourteen gowns which were its contents.

"I will certainly do it," she said to herself, and after some pondering she selected the plainest and the oldest—a white cashmere—and spread it out on her lap.

The smile of satisfaction deepened on her lips.

"I should not wear it six times more—and even if I *do* miss it," she said to herself, generously, "I should be willing to make a sacrifice now and then. I will certainly do it."

Her heart grew light. "How pleased Assunta will be!" She was so pleased with herself for thinking of it, that she shut up the other thirteen gowns gayly and went in to dinner, still smiling. There is nothing so sweet, the sages tell us, as a self-approving conscience.

One good action begets another.

"Does Gemma like strawberries?" asked the Signorina, languidly, as she filled her saucer for the third time, while Assunta stood beaming near.

"*Chi lo sa?*" answered Assunta, tranquilly.

At this remarkable reply the Signorina raised her eyes in astonishment.

"She has never tasted them," explained Assunta. "They are so dear—the Signorina knows——"

"Never tasted them!" repeated the Signorina. "Do not you have fruit—all the fruit you want—in Tuscany?"

"Oh, there is plenty of fruit, Signorina," responded Assunta, cheeringly, "but for poor people it costs too much. Sometimes," she added, "we have tasted figs; yes, more than once in my life have I eaten them fresh" (the Signorina had an instant vision of them, purple and luscious, and sixteen for a soldo), "but dried—never; as for oranges and other fruits—the Signorina knows what they cost—I and my people have never tasted them. Are not the strawberries good, that the Signorina is leaving them?"

"Give them to Gemma," said the Signorina, with a gesture of loathing, walking away.

Presently she returned with something white in her arms, but no triumph in her expression.

"Assunta," she said, hesitatingly, "if you can use this for Giulia"—she laid it on the sofa.

Assunta fell on her knees before it.

"Don't!" said the Signorina, "don't!" and she fled.

"*Dio mio! Dio mio!*" murmured Assunta all the way up the hill, tears dropping through every smile, but not one upon the precious cashmere.

"Giulia, oh, Giulia! arrive below!" she shouted up the stairs, and then she opened her apron.

Oh, the rapture! Giulia laughed and cried for joy; Delia rejoiced un-

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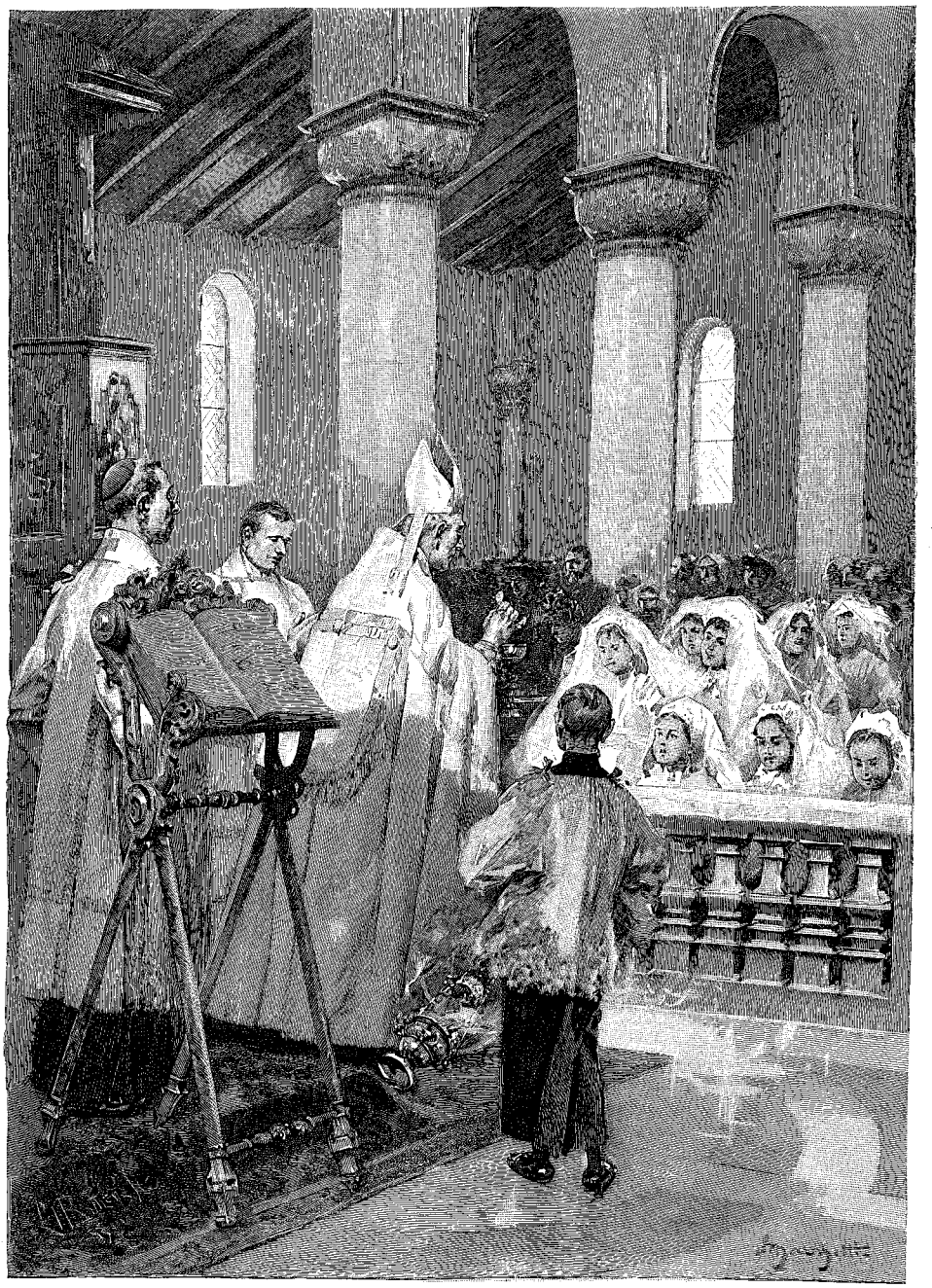

DRAWN BY L. MARCHETTI. ENGRAVED BY C. I. BUTLER.

Twelve little brides of Heaven.—Page 147.

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selfishly; Gemma, coughing painfully, came and looked wistfully—hers had not been so fine nearly, and this would have many, many tucks.

In their hearts all had begun to despair, but now that the dress had found itself the rest would surely follow. Giulia flew back to her frame, and her fingers flew also with fresh activity; from time to time she crept away to peep at the wonderful dress all wrapped away in paper, and then flew back again. Delia began a new fan, and Gemma—pale Gemma—took up the straw in her thin fingers and began to weave a little basket for the Signorina. Even 'Tonio, on the strength of the great rejoicing, crept back to work the next day; for he thought he might at least make enough for shoes for the bambina—and he did.

"If the Signorina can spare me," said Assunta, tremulous with pride, "Giulia is coming at half-past twenty-one o'clock to go to the city."

The Signorina looked up quickly. Could it be?

The smile trembling on Assunta's lips ran over and overflowed her furrowed face — one might say her soul smiled.

"*Si*, Signorina," she answered the look; "we go to buy the shoes, also the stockings, also"—her voice trembled with this culminating triumph—"the ribbon."

The Signorina clapped her hands.

"*Brava! Brava!*"

Assunta moved softly and ecstatically about, doing her work; but that her mind was full of its own bliss the Signorina, tripping steadily away and affecting to hear nothing, could tell.

"Beautiful little things! beautiful little things!" she could hear her sigh ecstatically, as she lifted the Signorina's thrice-patched number fours and surveyed them with lingering admiration—perhaps picturing a pair as fair on Giulia's feet. And she spent a most unusual care upon the toilet-table and all its knick-knacks, as if they had a suddenly acquired relation through the splendors about to be Giulia's.

She kept that bright-eyed and exultant little maiden waiting long after the hour, while she scrupulously fulfilled every service; for nothing was permitted to take precedence of the Signorina's comfort. At length, however, they departed, Assunta quite stiff with importance, Giulia openly dancing at her side. They walked, of course; for who would dream of spending twice eighty centimes on a tram?—and what were six miles—with the boots at their end! Giulia looked about her secretly at the Piazza—she would have liked Tesita to see her going to the city to shop, just like a signorina; but Tesita was not there.

The Signorina could scarcely wait for the next morning, but when it came she had her question out almost before she heard the door open.

"The boots—are they beautiful, Assunta? And the ribbon?"

"*If* they are beautiful, Signorina!—five lire they cost me in Florence! And the stockings, Signorina!—beautiful black ones for half a lira! As for the ribbon—two metres and a half—so wide, a franc and a half. Giulia is *pazza, pazza* with joy!—and the *sarta* finishes the dress at this hour—the Signorina will see if it is beautiful!"

"And Gemma—and 'Tonio?" asked the Signorina, smiling.

Alas! why had she asked!

Assunta found her voice in a moment.

"*Chi lo sa*, Signorina?" she said, sadly; "the Gemma stays in bed this morning."

"And 'Tonio?"

"'Tonio also stays in bed; the good and the bad come always together—it is necessary to have patience."

"Tesita also is ill," announced Assunta, later in the day. "She has the *tifo*."

"Ah! I hope she is not very ill," replied the Signorina.

"It would be better that she should die," said Assunta, with sorrowful sternness. "When a girl stays on the streets it is better that she dies; she will come to nothing good. There are persons who will do anything for money." Then, her indignation melting into a smile, she added:

"The Signorina will not forget that she has promised—to-morrow at eight she will be in the Duomo?"

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"She will not forget, Assunta; she will be there."

. . . . . .

It had come at last, the great day; and, for a miracle of miracles, rain came not with it. Up on the hill-top they were stirring with the daylight, for how was it possible to sleep with those boots in plain sight and the knowledge of that gown in the drawer?

Giulia flew from room to room, but not more excitedly than her mother and Delia. The whole family convened to assist at the ceremony of dressing, and as article after article went on, Assunta, standing by, calculated the cost. That added immensely to the impressiveness.

First the beautiful black stockings: "Half a franc," murmured Assunta, breathlessly, as they were drawn on, slowly, without a jerk or a pull, lest they should tear. Then the boots—miles too large and quite shapeless, for who would be so incredibly reckless as to buy boots for five francs only large enough for a foot as it is, and take no thought for next year or the year after? They had patent leather tips, however, and Giulia could hardly stand up in them for pride. Then came the skirt, with many tucks and all the fulness in front, as Fiesolan dresses are wont to have it; and the waist, also tucked in every possible direction, lengthwise and breadthwise, to allow for the years of letting out and down; naturally, one could not hope to have a second gown like this.

"Three francs for the *sarta* and half a franc for the buttons," commented Assunta, as Delia fastened them; for Giulia's fingers were useless, they shook so.

Then the veil: a splendid square of curtain muslin, falling quite to the bottom of the short skirt and gathered full about the rosy face under the ribbon garland.

"Two metres and a half—a franc and a half it cost," murmured Assunta.

There was yet something lacking, the white cotton gloves Gemma had worn three years before. Immensely large they made Giulia's slender brown hands look, and the fingers were worn through, but still they were truly magnificent.

They all stood off and gazed.

At last!——

"Ten lire and a half I spent for it!" said Assunta, with a sigh of unutterable content. "How much it is beautiful—*Quanto è bella!*"

"*Quanto è bella!*" The Signorina said the same words an hour later, as she entered the dim and still Duomo from the morning sunlight, and the sixteen little boys and twelve little brides of Heaven carried up their flowers to the Madonna. Nearly all Fiesole was there, and not only priests and acolytes in due profusion, but a Bishop and an Archbishop in white and gold before the altar.

The little brides knelt on one side and the little boys on the other, and twenty-eight pairs of small hands in gloves rested on the chancel railing; while twenty-eight heads bent devoutly, with now and then a furtive side-glance at one's veil to be sure it was down, or at one's ribbons to be sure they were still there.

The Bishop prayed and the Archbishop exhorted; then the Archbishop prayed and the Bishop exhorted; and finally, after all the ceremony had been duly observed, the sixteen little boys went up two by two and knelt to receive the holy wafer. Then came the turn of the twelve little brides, and the prettiest of them all was Assunta's Giulia in the much-tucked dress, with the beautiful boots creaking as she went, and the long veil fluttering about the rosy face, sweetly serious for the moment and forgetful of all her finery, I really think. The huge cotton gloves were devoutly folded over a white prayer-book, lent for the occasion. And as they went:

"Verbum caro, panem verum,
Verbo carnem efficit,
Fitque Sanguis Christi merum
Et si sensus deficit:
Ad firmandum cor sincerum
Sola fides sufficit,"

rose the voices all about them.

Eight small brides had knelt and risen; now it was Giulia's turn. The Signorina leaned forward; two little

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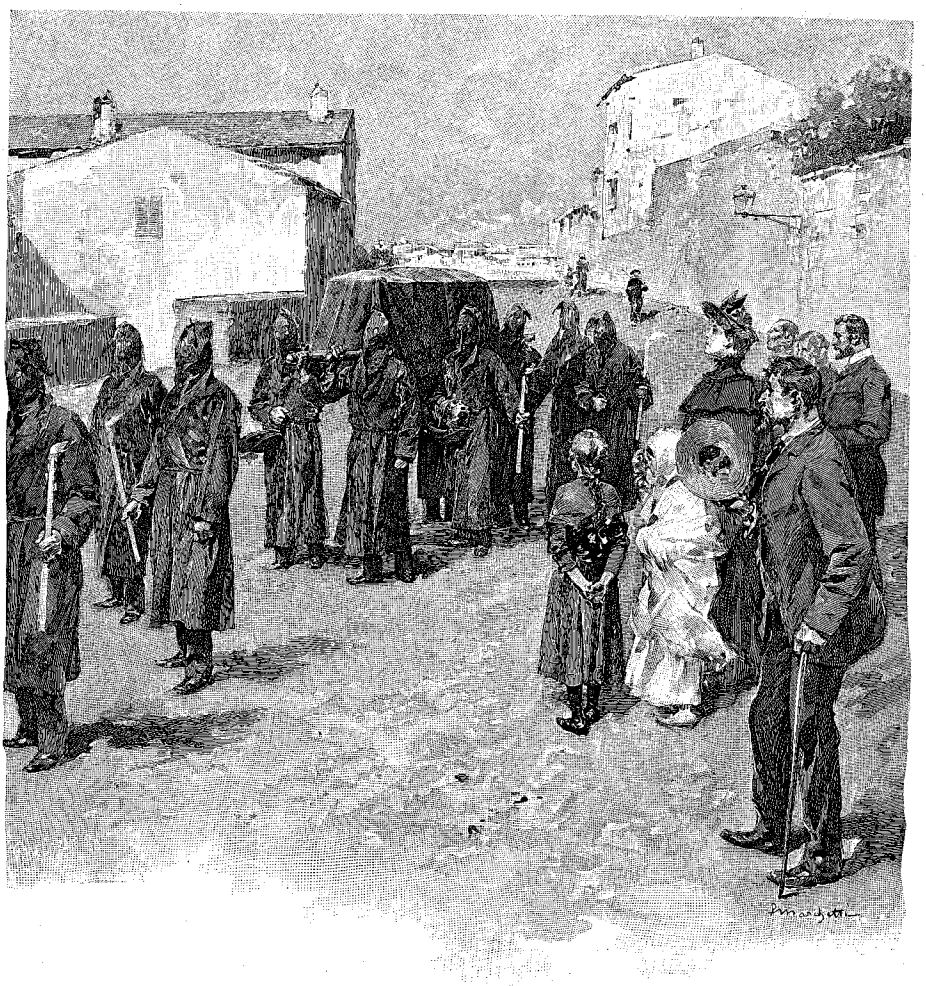

But nobody dreamed it was Tesita going by in such state.

figures knelt ; the Archbishop popped something into two rosy mouths, opened like a bird's to be fed ; then two little figures rose and the next two advanced. The great moment was over ; Giulia had taken her first communion, and——

"O Salutaris Hostia! qui cœli pandis ostia!"

sang the voices softly.

But all was not over ; not until each had received a silver crucifix (to wear until one's second communion, eight days later), a pictured saint's card, a medal with a pink ribbon which the Archbishop himself threw over the bent heads, and the mammas and sisters stealthily adjusted from behind ; and, last of all, a loaf of consecrated bread to take home for the *collazione* after the service. Then the Archbishop blessed the little flock, and everyone pressed forward to see the little boys and the brides, but especially the brides, because they were so much more fine to see ; and so, all whispering and admiring, the crowd poured from the Duomo, not forgetting to cross one's self with holy water at the font.

Giulia, escorted by a group of admiring friends, walked demurely, casting a glance to see if haply Tesita was witnessing her triumph ; but Tesita was not there. The Signorina, how-

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ever, was there and stopped to admire everything—from the white gown and veil to the crucifix and medal. Then they started up the hill, the little bride blushing with pleasure and modesty, her hands demurely clasping the book and all her train following. As they went up on one side another little procession came down on the other—black-masked Brothers of Mercy carrying a small black bier. Everyone stepped aside to let them pass, and Giulia crossed herself twice, like a pious little maiden, once at the crucifix, once at the bier. But nobody dreamed it was Tesita going by in such state, until the next day, when rosy Annina appeared on the piazza with Beppe and lisped out, "*Signorine—poverino!*" in funny imitation of Tesita. It was, however, "*a providenza,*" Assunta declared then, "for it was certain she would have come to nothing good."

Far from any thought of Tesita, Giulia sped on up the steep hill till the little house came in sight; and there on the threshold, with such a face as the angels may wear, stood Assunta, watching the triumph of her child.

The little bride, finery and all, flew into her arms; oh, it had been so beautiful!

Assunta turned her beaming eyes upon the group. The Signorina had kept her promise. She had seen it all—the procession to the Madonna—the Archbishop—all; and it was beautiful, *non è vero?* Perhaps she had even seen the *bambina* take her communion, at the very moment itself.

The very precise moment, even to the opening and shutting of the rosy mouth; it had been most beautiful, and——

"Oh, Assunta, Assunta!" exclaimed the Signorina, taking the hard hand in hers, with sorrowful passion, "why were you not there?"

Assunta laughed, a little short, happy, shame-faced laugh.

"Oh, Signorina mia!" she said, deprecatingly; "in this gown and these boots! how was it possible? But it was truly beautiful, was it not?" she added, gleefully. "And the Signorina saw my *bambina;*" her eyes rested proudly on the small white figure holding court in the dingy room.

Never was such a day! To be sure, there was no collation—it had been manifestly impossible to compass that; but the neighbors came flocking all day long to admire and declare that within memory there had not been a prettier communicant — no, nor one that deserved better.

'Tonio sat proudly by, and Gemma, propped up among pillows, listened and shared unenviously in her little sister's triumph, while Delia ran about waiting on everybody. As for Assunta, she only stood and smiled and smiled. Never was such a day!

But the longest and the happiest day must end at last, and presently the white gown was taken off—oh, how carefully—and folded away against the festa of Corpus Domini, and the veil was also laid away, and the fine prayer-book sent home, while the beautiful boots were stood on the bureau where everyone could look at them.

Then the soft night of Tuscany came down—luminous and fragrant and alive with silence—and everybody slept.

Tesita, alone for the first time in her life in the *stanza mortuaria*, slept with wide-open eyes and the sound of slowly dripping water near by. And in the house on the hill-top, worn out with excitement, all slept. 'Tonio, forgetful of his rheumatism, and tired Delia, and even Gemma, ceasing to cough for a time, lay sleeping with the little red-stained handkerchief in her hot hand. In the other room Giulia, clasping the silver crucifix, dreamed that it was already Corpus Domini. But Assunta, a smile of fathomless content still on her thin lips, slept dreamlessly—the sleep of profound exhaustion.

Only the Signorina down in the villa could not sleep for thinking of many things.

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THE NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT.

By Julian Ralph.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY W. T. SMEDLEY.

EVERY intelligent man read with much interest the project of M. de Blowitz for manufacturing newspaper correspondents, and it is fair to presume that some were impressed by it. I do not agree with him—not even with his preliminary assumption that journalists can be made at all, except as (when the world shall advance to the point the Mormons aim at) we shall arrange for all sorts of human talent, as we now do for various points of excellence in horses and milch-cows. Professor Brainard G. Smith, of Cornell, knew that, even when he presided over the class or school of journalism at that university. He was criticised and ridiculed by a hasty and ignorant number of journalists, who supposed that he aimed to establish a factory for turning out newspaper men as sashes and blinds are produced. He never was nonsensical. He aimed only to teach composition, as the now lost art of letter writing was taught one hundred years ago, by precept and example. He offered to take those who thought they wanted to be newspaper men (I like that honest, modern word better than the word journalists), and to give them a chance to write articles as for a newspaper, while he talked to them about the work, supplied them with examples of what was best in the ways of reporting, and "edited" their "copy" as he had done on a daily newspaper in days gone by. The only question was whether such a department ought to be included in the plan of a college—or even in that of a technical school—since the fellows who have the gift would still have to begin at the bottom when they took up regular work, and would best learn the little that can be taught about newspaper writing when they were set to acquire the knowledge by such degrees as would regulate their ability to earn much or little at the business.

Newspaper men are born and not made. I do not mean that the art of contributing skill in modern news-writing or editorial work is any nearer to heavenly standards than the reader holds it to be, whatever his opinions are; but the phrase "heaven-born" expresses what it is. It cannot be taught or manufactured in a boy. There are persons in Northern New York who are hoarding the scraps of paper whereon my friend, Frederic Remington, scrawled the childish drawings by means of which he gave hint of what his life-work was to be, and it is such an essence as he possessed which must be in the journalist in childhood. The peculiar faculties of a blacksmith are in the prospective blacksmith in the same way—and others are in the future money-maker, the future architect, and the future horse doctor, if you please, as well. The man who is or is not a born newspaper man either can write entertainingly and with some sense of color and proportion about the things that are interesting or important—or he cannot. If he can, that ability must be developed and fashioned, not according to any so-called "tricks of the trade," however, for the artist or preacher or doctor or writer who follows only the cut-and-dried rules of his calling is a mere bush that does not flower. If he does not develop his own methods and "style," he will never amount to much beyond getting his living.

There are newspaper editors, as there are "art directors" and college professors, who think this is all humbug. They are like the old English fathers who put the first son in the army, the second one in the navy, and the third in the church. Such men do not recognize the quality called "genius," except where it is so pronounced as to be overmastering. The father of the elder

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DRAWN BY W. T. SMEDLEY.

"The mere reporter who always remains a reporter, with a department to cover or errands to run."

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Charles Mathews distinguished his kind when he set out to follow his son and hiss him off the stage, but desisted on the first night because the boy made him laugh so that he could not hiss. Such are the stubborn folk who now and then pop up in newspaper offices, and establish business rules and talk of "discipline," who suspend and fine and lecture the writers who are under them. It does not do, and there lies a proof of the old-fashioned idea that talent is innate and not manufacturable. The self-effacement of a newspaper correspondent is not that of a soldier; it is that of a scout. These martinets can decimate their forces, they can weed out the talent and hold fast to the sticks, and they can crush down *esprit de corps* and greatly weaken a newspaper; that is all. Newspaper making is not a business, except in the publication office. It is not a business—as the word is meant to be used—in the editorial or reporters' rooms. The kind of brains that are powerful there would not fit a man to earn his salt in trade. Once, when I called on a millionaire for a piece of news, at seven o'clock every morning at his house, twice a day at his office, and at least once every night at his home, he said to me: "You newspaper men amaze me by your persistence and enterprise. I have made ten millions in the lumber business, but if I could have employed young men like the newspaper reporters, I would have made one hundred millions in half the time."

How can anyone hope to succeed while fettering with business rules such enthusiasm, perseverance, self-sacrifice, courage, ingenuity, wit, cheerfulness, and tact as go to make up the successful modern reporter of the first or second grades? The average worker for wages begins a fixed routine at a certain hour every day, performs it, and goes back to his home and his own pleasures in eight or ten hours; but this queer creation of the period, the newspaper man, penetrates the wilds of Athabasca in midwinter to find a white girl who is said to be in the custody of Indians; floats about in the bay or ocean for days to meet a steamship; sees himself locked and battened in an untried submarine boat, as Stephen Bonsal did not long ago, to be shot down to the bottom of the harbor in that perambulating coffin; or at a moment's notice goes to Hamburg, when it is the hot-bed of a cholera epidemic, to put up there and report what he sees. This singular creature can make no appointment with wife or friend, even a day in advance. He cannot predict where he will be living next year or next month. He is not surprised, on coming back from a wearisome journey at midnight, to find that he is ordered to start on another expedition in five hours. He does not deal with his own kind or any special sort of men, but with all kinds, under all circumstances; and having written an account of a week's stay aboard the most luxurious steam yacht of the period, he goes post-haste to witness a miners' riot in the mountains of North Carolina. All that is *a* business, if you please, but it is not what men call "business." A newspaper is a co-operative concern in all except an equal division of the earnings; and since a good half of the newspapers do not more than pay their way, it is good for the writers that the co-operative tendency stops where it does. The more thoroughly a newspaper manager relies upon the enthusiasm and pride of his men, the more considerable is his success. The office of the only newspaper I know well—*The Sun*—which most journalists regard as the most brilliant and most wide-awake product of their profession, is frequently likened to a club-house. No taint of caste poisons its atmosphere or forces its workers into cliques, and when its men have no work to do they play together, at cards, or chess, or gymnastics, or whatever.

No newspaper has gone so far in pressing the practical view of the character of newspaper enterprises as the *Evening Post*, which calls our newspapers speculative concerns that gather news to sell it at a profit. This is the business idea which, as I say, is correct, in so far as the publication office is concerned. Yet it cannot have been a mere clerk who gathered the data for that journal's biographies of the machine politicians of New York; nor was

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"He goes post-haste to witness a miners' riot in the mountains of North Carolina."

it an accountant or salesman who commented upon these records in the editorial columns, for clerks do not perform that sort of work, nor do wages alone pay for them. The *Evening Post* is one of the very ablest and best newspapers in America, and its practical view of the profession of which it is a product must be regarded as one among the many eccentricities that give it distinction, even when they do not add to its worth.

It expressed the opinion to which I have referred in connection with the "hounding" of President Cleveland by reporters, and that reminded me that among the several Presidents who have honored me with their friendship or acquaintance, there was one—General Arthur—whom I was once sent to

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"hound," though he and I called it reporting his fishing trip to the Thousand Islands. He told me his experiences from day to day, and at times ordered especially fine fish that he caught served to me and the other correspondents who ate at the next table

"The best Washington correspondents work upon a friendly basis with cabinet officers and senators."

to his, and I remember troubling him only once. On that occasion I had sent off my despatch and returned to the hotel at two o'clock in the morning, to find all the doors locked and all the lights, except those in the President's suite of rooms, gone out like the Israelites from Egypt. Captain R. F. Coffin, now part of a treasured memory, and Mr. Macdona, who is at present an assistant district attorney in this city, were with me, and we battered at a side door to wake the servants. In time the door was opened by the President of the United States. Knowing him only as a journalist must know all men, without too much awe of place or power, we yet were chagrined at having disturbed and brought to the door a President—and particularly one of so charming a personality as his—and we begged his pardon.

"Why, that's all right," he said; "you wouldn't have got in till morning if I had not come. No one is up in the house but me. I could have sent my colored boy, but he had fallen asleep and I hated to wake him."

What I have said of journalism is part of that which applies to the subject in hand: the special correspondent, or, as they call him in England, "the special." The mere reporter who always remains a reporter, with a department to cover or errands to run, may or may not be especially gifted. The special correspondent must be "to the manner born." He may or may not have creative ability. That is essential to the sketch-writer, whether he does his work on the editorial page or supplies the character sketches that make too little renown for the men who write beside the news-columns. But the special correspondent must have a great many other qualities of an uncommon kind, and in a remarkable degree. He must have such a temperament as to be new-born every morning, and to look on all that he is to write about with new eyes and fresh interest. He must have a made-to-order sort of a soul, that will suffer itself to be thrown into whatever he does as a boy's soul enters into what games he plays at college. He must have at once the broadest and the finest power of observation, and the vocabulary and facility that are the bases of expression and freedom with his pen. He must be as sanguine as a song-bird, and as strong and willing as a race-horse. Above all, he must love his work better than his comfort, his club, his home, or his friends, else he might some day pause and consider for what small reward and shadowy glory he is risking his neck or plunging into discomfort—a train of thoughts which can never come to a correspondent as it does to men of many another stamp who live for money, for comfort, or for social distinction. He must have a personality all vigor to keep on past every hindrance, and with much candor and sweetness to win and keep men's confidence, so that they will admit

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him everywhere and talk to him unrestrainedly; but his personality must be of a kind that does not intrude itself too rigidly at many points, for, like an actor, he must be controlled by some other's character and appetite and likes —those of the Public. If he consults his own whims or feelings, or has stiff prejudices of his own, they must be very strong indeed—so strong as to subordinate both the public and his newspaper to his individuality. And then, in my opinion, he will be one of several forcible and eccentric writers whom we could all name, but he will not be the ideal or the typical special correspondent. Such a man will be apt to twist his facts to make them accord with his wishes, and in this case, if I employed him, I would send another and a genuine correspondent to make separate reports of the same matter, that my readers who liked the strong man's crochets could have them, while all the readers could get the news as well.

The special correspondent must be so constituted as to remain poor, and willingly, so long as he sticks to newspaper work. There have to be such men in a world that is as well ordered and complete as this—who write about what may make or ruin fortunes, and yet feel only a chronicler's interest in getting at the truth concerning them. I will not say what would happen if their palms itched, because they next to never do itch. Such is the peculiarity of their minds that, without the feeling of pariahs or the impulses of Bedouins, they consider nothing but their duty to the public. They want neither credit nor sympathy. It is their nature. In spite of the speculative character of a newspaper enterprise, it is to the public that the newspaper correspondent appeals one hundred times for every time that he is even asked to consider the whims or interests of the men who own the paper. If there are editors or owners who are not nearly equally disinterested in the collection and publication of the news, they are fools, and must be content with less than the fortune with which the public is certain to reward those who are.

There was once an idea that such men as the true "specials"—content to do superhuman and dangerous work for a salary and expenses—were apt to end in becoming a charge on their friends or the public, and were not to be wondered at if they were drunkards. A great many erratic, irresponsible geniuses and mock-geniuses, from the days of "The Spectator," in all likelihood, down to those of Pfaff's beer cellar, not long ago, were borne with and even encouraged under that notion. It was a wrong one. The special correspondent is trained to be a great expense to himself, because, when on duty away from home, he must live so as to acquire expensive tastes; but the day has gone by when either his employers or associates will put up with any form of unreliability or blameworthiness in his habits or his principles. The need of a barber and a bath, and the tenancy of an attic with a bottle in lieu of other furniture, are no longer recognized as the outward proof of even poetic ability.

"God bless you," said he, "I don't know him at all."

The correspondents of to-day must be and are welcome at the houses, clubs, and business places, of the men who lead in public affairs. They must be men of parts, and of good appearance

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and behavior. This is the day when a woman has interviewed the Pope, and a reporter has been nominated for mayor of Brooklyn (failing in which effort he became the model postmaster of the country). Nothing about the profession is more remarkable than the change that has come over the relationship between the correspondent and the so-called "great man." While there are reporters who "hound" public men, there are also public men who badger the newspaper folk. The typical correspondents, on the other hand, call upon the officials upon terms of equality and get from them what they want —to publish or not to publish, as the two agree. The best Washington correspondents work upon a friendly basis

"Tell the reporters to go to the devil," said the exalted foreigner.

with cabinet officers and senators—all of them that they care to know—and are recognized as men pursuing an honorable calling. I once congratulated an English reporter, who told me he had reported Gladstone's speeches for nearly twenty years, upon knowing that statesman so well. "God bless you," said he, "I don't know him at all. I was once unable to escape from his car without passing him, when he came in unexpectedly, and a mutual friend introduced me to him. But I never presumed upon that, you know." Such a man and many others in England have wondered at the place the best American newspaper correspondents have managed to carve out for themselves by earning the confidence and friendly interest of public men over there.

Two things the critic of the modern newspaper man is very apt to overlook. One is that nine times in ten, when a man's affairs become of interest to the public, he is as anxious to see the newspaper man as the other is to see him. The other thing is that a shrewd man, who recognizes the place the press has taken and the power it has, will easily manage to make it serve him to some extent while he is serving it. It serves him gladly if what he wants is of value or of interest to the public. A noble personage was once asked by an American what he could say to the reporters at home about something that concerned them both, and which had been discussed in this country by means of the cable.

"Tell the reporters to go to the devil," said the exalted foreigner.

"Oh, but I can't," said the American. "Our American way is to help each other along. I like to read about other men in our papers, and I must contribute my share to the fund of news. I will have to tell them whatever will do no harm for the public to know."

That illustrates another element in the situation that is helpful to the modern correspondent, and if he did not take full advantage of it, what a poor workman he would be!

The element of danger sometimes plays a part in the adventures of a man whose life is spent in minding the business of others, on behalf of the rest of mankind; but a peculiarity and a charm of that life is in the fact that he can never tell when or where the danger will arise. I have found it the next thing to a certainty, that when the most unsafety is looked for the least is found,

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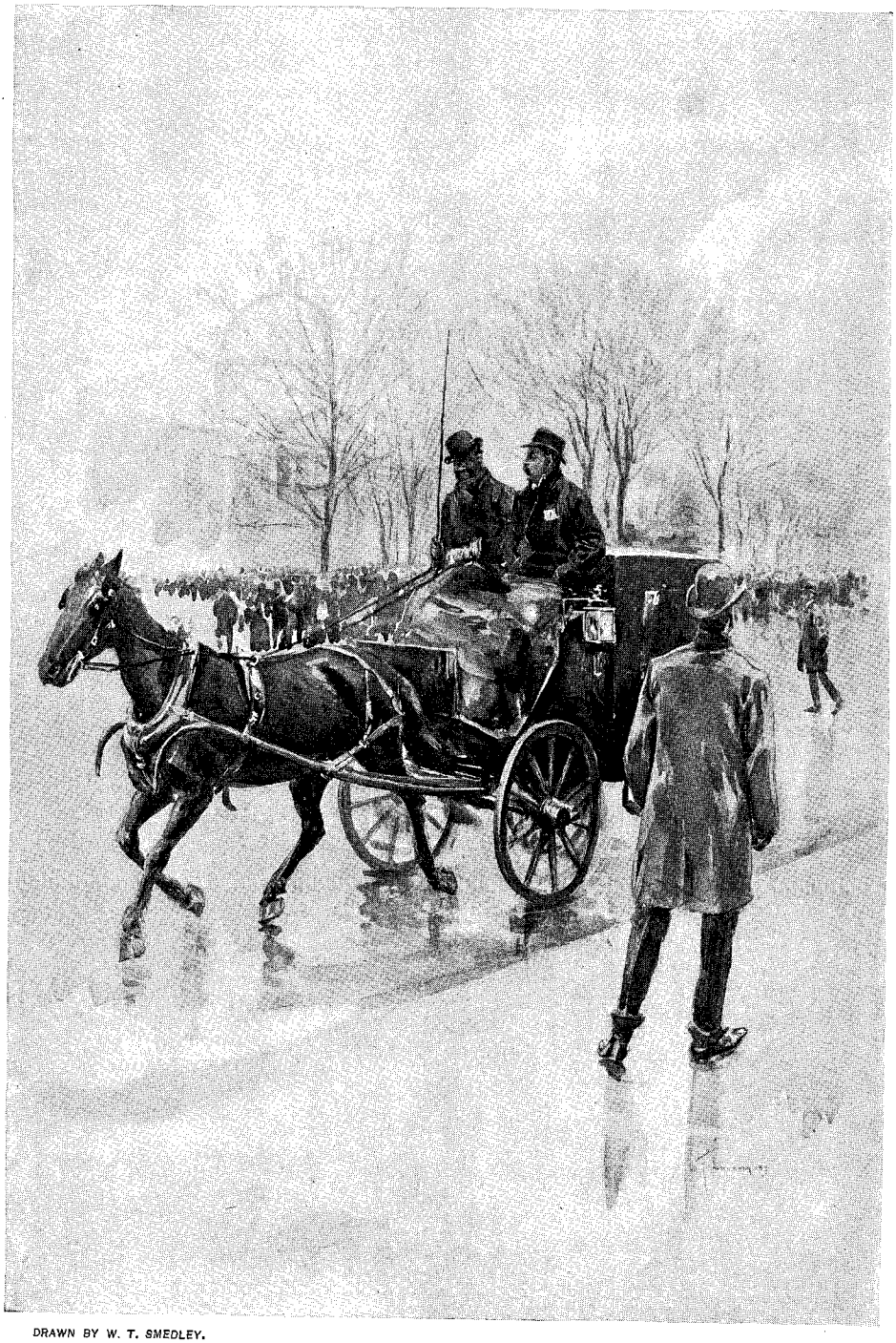

DRAWN BY W. T. SMEDLEY.

"I had myself called at five o'clock in the morning, and having a cab at hand, mounted the box with the negro driver and travelled about the city from end to end."

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whereas, when none is expected it often springs to the foreground. Being sent into Southern Indiana to investigate the White Caps, not long ago, I anticipated great mischief from the low-lived cowards who are so numerous in that region, and who compose the meanest lot of human beings I ever saw; the meanest in morals, the poorest in substance, the most frequently diseased and deformed in body. They are a people run to seed by means of an exclusiveness that has limited a host of them to a few surnames, and that has shut out new population at the point of a gun; the gun being always fired at the back of its victim. There had been reason enough for going there in reports of many cowardly and brutal outrages, but the truth, as I found it, was that the state of affairs was ten times worse than it had been reported. The night

"I took a hearty luncheon and sat down at half-past one o'clock to write steadily for twelve hours."

riders were out in almost every village, masked and armed, and bent on whipping women as often as men. Every here and there the scenes of murders and outrages were pointed out. Even a little gully-road leading to the principal out-door religious meeting-place of one county, had been the scene of a fight wherein men in ambush shot others who were on their way home from church on a Sunday night. Just as I reached that region a rumor had gone forth that the Federal Government meant to send a Secret Service or Pinkerton man to spy out every leader in every outrage that had taken place. It was commonly agreed that I was that official. I did not know it at the time, but even the law-abiding folks in the towns along the Ohio River discredited my assertion that I was a newspaper man, and spread the belief that I was a detective. There was one especially bad nest of White Caps that it was necessary to go to in order to talk to the perpetrators of a long list of midnight outrages. I reached the place and found the leader—the terror of the country-side—loafing in a cross-roads store with a friend or two, and several others who held the middle course—quite popular in such a time and place—of being mortally afraid of, and excessively polite to, the White Caps.

The chief rapscallion, whom I wished to interview, seemed to me at the first glance to be seven feet high and as raw-boned and vicious-looking as a wolf. He tried to keep his back toward the open floor-space in the store. My visit was expected. All had gathered there when it was known that I had come to the town. I asked a few pointed questions of the storekeeper, and got some exceptionally dull answers. Then I inquired for the ringleader. No one pointed him out or answered me. All the men looked at the floor. I never was more certain that I was in for a lot of trouble. Having the man's description well in mind, I advanced and touched his arm lightly with my fingers. It was like touching a mould of jelly. He quivered all over. All my anxiety vanished at once. The man was a cur, and his fright was almost pitiable to witness.

"Colonel, I don't know nothin' about that scrape at ——'s," he said; "I kin prove I was ter hum all that night—

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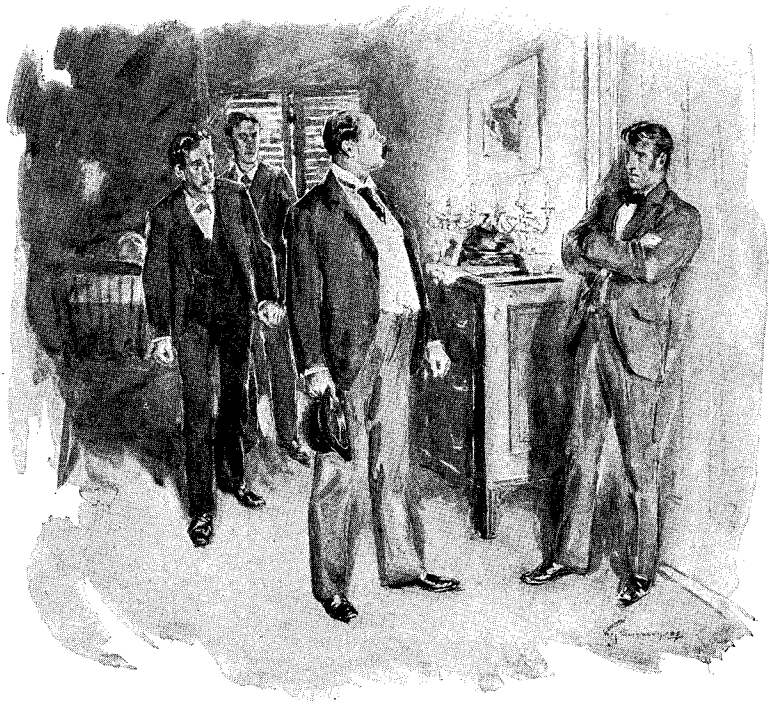
and all the other nights—and hain't had nothin' to do with no White Cap business"—all this before I had accused him of anything whatever.

He supposed himself in the toils of a detective of dime-novel calibre, from whom nothing could be hidden, and only capital punishment could be expected. He was by nature as harmless as a turtledove to any man in the daytime. It was at night, with his rawhide swung over a woman's naked back, that he played his dangerous part.

Soon afterward it was my turn to be frightened. The stories of White Cap outrages that were reeled off to me all day and every day were generally alike, and the bursting in of a cabin door, the dragging out of a cowering man or woman to be whipped, were the leading features of nearly every tale. I had gone to bed in a rickety hotel one night, with a head and a notebook full of such data. In the middle of the night I was awakened by the tramp of heavily shod feet and the grumble of hoarse voices. Then came a violent assault on a door, which presently gave way with a crash. I had not known how nervous I was, but now I believed that a band of White Cap Regulators had come for me and had burst in the wrong door in their haste. Fortunately, the partitions were thin and the succeeding sounds reassured me. Two travellers and the stable-boy of the tavern had forced a swollen door and the travellers were going to bed.



"And now," said I, advancing to the fellow who had his back against the door, "stand aside and end this folly—quick!"

That moment was almost as exciting as another when, like a fool, for no reason better than dare-deviltry could offer, I had paid a Welshman to take me down into a coal mine in which there had been an explosion of fire-damp accompanied by great loss of life. The superintendent had said it was as much as any man's life was worth to venture in there, because the machinery which was used to create a draft through the mine had not been running for a couple of days, and the place was likely to be newly filled with the gas that causes so much mischief

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in coal mines. But, on the other hand, I had never been in a great mine, and I was younger than I have ever been since. My Welshman startled me by carrying a naked lamp, but he said he could get no other without "the company" finding out about his project. Deep down and far along in the black and dripping main roadway or tunnel, through that buried and deserted honeycomb of rocks, my Welshman began to act like an idiot or a madman. He had greatly interested me by telling of his long acquaintance with the "Brown People" (brownies) who live in mines, and who are only seen, skipping about or sitting cross-legged in the crannies, on the eve of a terrible accident. One had attracted his attention and smiled and beckoned to him on the day of the explosion, but there was not time to escape. The explosion followed close upon the warning. Thus we came to talk of the terrible fire-damp, and, to my astonishment, the Welshman, in order to show me where it lurked, began poking the naked flame of his lamp up into the black crannies over our heads, crying eagerly: "It do be in sooch places like this and in sooch a place as this." Perhaps there was little danger. When I got the lamp out of the idiot's hands he said he "didn't know; mebbe she might blow up again."

"I do both," said I; "I take a cigar when I want one, and I give cigars to others when they want them."

On the other hand, danger comes where one does not seek or expect it. Once, when I was investigating the horrible and (even yet) mysterious murder of a young girl in a New Jersey village, I was taken for the murderer by her relatives—whom I could not blame, for they were ignorant, wrought up to an ugly pitch, and suspicious of every stranger who came upon the scene. The girl had been buxom and pretty, and it must have been a stranger who slew her, they thought, for none who knew her could find it in their hearts or in her nature to attempt to wrong her. In the course of a search of the neighborhood I visited the home of the afflicted family more than once, and on the last occasion

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was invited in to see the body. As I could not judge what manner of girl she had been without seeing her, I went in. Her three grown-up brothers were there, and as I stood beside the coffin one returned to the door of the room, closed it, and put his back against it. The others then attempted to carry out a project they had cherished but concealed, which was to have me touch the body in order that they might see whether blood flowed from the wounds, according to an old superstition which holds that such dumb mouths will accuse a murderer. At the moment I would not have done as they wished for a fortune.

"Put your hand on her," said one.

"I will not."

"Touch her with your hand. You must, I tell you," said another.

"You cannot get away. Touch her."

They were terribly in earnest.

"I will do nothing of the sort," I said, and then I made a very short but very earnest speech, in which I explained who I was and how easily they could satisfy themselves about me. "And now," said I, advancing to the fellow who had his back against the door, "stand aside and end this folly—quick!"

He obeyed, and in an instant the air of out-doors tasted almost as sweet as anything that I ever drew down my throat. But danger, except of harm by accident, is not a thing to lift into prominence as a spice of the life of a correspondent. The town loafers who drink excessively and frequent bar-rooms, can discount almost anyone else in the extent of the dangers they face. The typical correspondent offsets many of the risks that he runs by being diplomatic, naturally and by training, and if he is not too young he has learned the old rule that discretion is the better part of valor. In the West, as they are fond of saying out there, "only the bad men get killed," and in one large Western city I was told that a ruffian who murders another is not too sharply pursued if he tries to get away, because to hang or imprison him is to rid the world of only one scapegrace, whereas, if he keeps his freedom he will either kill more scoundrels or be killed himself. The only time I ever had a pistol aimed at me with murderous intent was during a dinner on a ship in New York harbor, in the course of a simple job at reporting, and that was because I did not sing a Southern war ballad at a drunken man's command, eleven years after the close of the Civil War.

I have been asked to write upon this subject of the newspaper correspondent, and to illustrate what I write with my own experiences. It will be an easier task—and pleasanter for the reader—if it is understood that, while describing the qualities of the perfect and typical man of this sort, I am not thinking of myself. As a correspondent I have only been what I have been. What I would like to have been is the kind of man who is here described.

If I have done anything uncommon in newspaper work, it has been in the way of reporting the main stem of important events completely, and at great lengths, unaided and alone. It is said that in New York, at least, I have been peculiar in possessing the—physique is perhaps the greatest requisite—to carry out tasks of the sort, necessitating the nearest approach to an imitation of ubiquitousness, and resulting in from seven to ten columns of solid writing for the next day's paper. Some curiosity as to how this is done has been manifested by others in the profession, and I have been asked to explain it, but it seems to me there is little to tell. Take the last inauguration of a President for an illustration. I had myself called at five o'clock in the morning, and having a cab at hand, mounted the box with the negro driver and travelled about the city from end to end and side to side. I did this to see the people get up and the trains roll in and the soldiers turn out—to catch the Capital robing like a bride for her wedding. After a breakfast, eaten calmly, I made another tour of the town and then began to approach the subject more closely, calling at the White House, mingling with the crowds in the principal hotels, moving between the Senate and the House of Representatives, to report the hurly-burly of the closing moments of a dying administration. I saw the old and the new President, and then wit-

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nessed the inauguration ceremonies and the parade. Then, having seen the new family in place in the White House, I took a hearty luncheon and sat down at half-past one o'clock to write steadily for twelve hours, with plenty of pencils and pads and messenger boys at hand, and with my note-book supplemented by clippings from all the afternoon papers (covering details to which I might or might not wish to refer). Cigars, a sandwich or two at supper-time, and a stout horn of brandy late at night were my other equipments.

That is hard work, but it is as nothing, in that respect, when compared with the task of reporting a national convention in the same way. One needs only to *see* an inauguration; in a national convention one must *know*. The leading men, their records, motives, and plottings, must be known. If one such man is absent from the convention hall, it must be known where he is and what he is doing. There is nothing in all the business that compares with a national convention for trying the body and mind of a man who essays to master and report it; that is, if he works for a newspaper which wants the truth, regardless of its predictions or policy. In the course of it there comes a task beside which the rest of it has been trifling. That is, the "covering" of a night session when the balloting is in progress.

Then the reporter of the main story selects the ablest man on his staff and asks him to stand beside him and whisper everything that he sees. The reporter is seeing for himself, but must write as well, and so may miss a word or a tableau. He is writing as for his life. He has a man to keep sharpening his pencils and to hand his copy to the telegraph boys, who are throwing themselves at him and away from him like balls out of cannon. Sometimes he is allowed to finish twenty words on a sheet, but more often the pages are torn from under his pencil with only eight or ten words on each one. His desk is a board; men are clambering over him, the place is in a tumult. But all that and the strain conduce to good work. The strain! He knows that the hungry maw of the printing-press in New York is wide-open, that the wires are loaded, that his matter is being seized and flung into extra editions, and that all around him are men as able as himself, doing the same work, and determined to excel him at it if they can. The fevered pencil flies, every nerve is strained, every brain-cell is clear. Comment, description, reminiscence, dialogue, and explanation, flow upon the impatient sheets in short paragraphs, like slivers of crystal. There is no turning back, no chance for correction or rearrangement, no possibility of changing a word that has been written. Yet there must be no mistakes, no confusion or complexity. For two or three hours, perhaps even longer, this race is kept up. That is the hardest task that falls to the lot of a "special," and it is the most intoxicating. Whoever does it is glad that he has lived to drink so deep a draught of that matchless elixir, which keeps us all young till we die—excitement.

To "beat" his fellows is still the chief aim and glory of every man who writes on the newspages, but the "beat" (as an exclusive piece of news is called) is growing to be more and more a product of intimate acquaintance with public men, and less and less a result of agility of mind and body. The great press associations now scatter the news of important happenings indiscriminately, and special correspondents do very little racing with locomotives and tugs, and still less telegraphing of the Bible—a favorite trick of a bygone day, accomplished by instructing a telegraph operator to send off your "copy" and then supplement it with the book of Job or Revelations, so as to busy the wire until it was too late for any other correspondent to send in his news. The last time I tried that my competitor rowed across Haverstraw Bay in a storm, and, from another point, sent in a story as complete as my own. The old-fashioned competitions now occur in lonely country regions, where the facilities for telegraphing are so meagre as to tempt a man to try to control them. I remember a delightful half-hour when a *Tribune* man tried to reach a country wire first in order to shut me out. We had to

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run three miles over a plain that was one great glare of ice. He was the faster runner and appeared to have everything his own way, but suddenly he slipped and rolled down the side of a gully to fetch up at the bottom badly hurt. The tearing of his clothes and peeling of his face did not bother him, but his ankle was sprained and he could not walk without help.

"I give up," said he. "Will you help me to the village?"

"I don't know," I replied. "Is the wire mine?"

"Of course," said he; "I'm done." But I gave him his turn at it. The matter did not warrant shutting him out.

Constituted as I am, the comic side of my own experiences has always interested me greatly and filled a large place in my memory. Of one long ride in the wilderness beside Lake Superior, for instance, I recall, first, the splendid beauties of the woods and, next, the comic habit of my French-Canadian guide in always speaking of the Indians of the neighborhood as "dose tobacco-sign people." Of another trip, undertaken in order to describe the hunting of big game, I remember with most pleasure the manner in which my fare was changed after I had eaten fried bacon until, as Mr. Remington, who was with me, once expressed it, "it will be found sticking to our ribs when the last trump is blown." Mornings, noons, and nights we soiled the very forest with the eternal frying of pork, while we waited for the crust of snow to soften so that we could hunt without crashing about with the noise of wounded elephants. After nearly a week of this cloying experience, one of our half-breeds improvised a fishing-rod, attached a line and hook to it, and said with a rare breach of semi-Indian reticence, "Be a good job if I catch some fish." He went an eighth of a mile in a direction in which none of us had moved, and there I, following him, found a beautiful, snow-blanketed lake stocked with a primeval abundance of trout. I laughed then, and have laughed ever since at the thought, when it occurred to me that we might never have known there was a change of diet within one hundred miles, if we had not eaten pork till it turned the cast-iron stomach of that half-breed.

One of my journeys was through Cuba from end to end, and as I was commissioned only to describe the scenery and hotels for the edification of tourists, and was to do it in a hurry, I was disinclined to waste any time upon a study of the Spanish tongue. The first man I met who spoke English was a patriot tobacconist, who loved my country and wanted Cuba joined to it. "Write down in Spanish," said I, "a sufficient number of handy phrases to carry me through the island." On a piece of brittle, brown straw paper he wrote the Spanish equivalents of about twenty words and sentences, and with that in my pocket I journeyed through the island with only one mishap. As I remember them, the things he wrote down were: "How much? I want breakfast—dinner—supper; wine; I want to go to ——; hurry up; no hurry; yes, please—no, thank you; I do not speak Spanish; I do not understand; can I have a room here? I want pen, ink, and paper; I am an American; How far is it to ——? All right." That prince in Scheherezade's tale did not get about much more easily or pleasantly on his magic carpet than did I with my square of wrapping paper; but, on one day, the unforeseen happened and I needed all the Spanish that I had not got.

I had taken a cab from Matanzas to the Yumuri Valley, and on the way—outside the city, in a deserted neighborhood—the driver stopped his horse. I got out and said "Hurry up." The driver shook his head, waved his hands, and appeared to swear terribly. I consulted my brown paper lexicon and said "no hurry," and retreated into the cab and away from the frightful heat of the sun. The driver descended from his box and came to the cab door, in front of which he delivered an oration which, for earnestness, eloquence, and the other qualities that move men can seldom have been equalled. I said "I do not understand." He sat down upon a rock and looked at me with mute helplessness—the picture of abandonment to despair. After a time I said

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again "Hurry up." Then he arose and once more relieved himself in a torrent of burning Spanish. I shrugged my shoulders. He went on. He appealed to me, pleading with his hands outstretched. I pulled out my brown paper and consulted it. I decided to tell him that I wanted the next meal in the order of the day, though I had but just eaten. His fiery speech continued, so I said "Hurry up," and then appeared to relent and remarked, "No hurry," adding that I was an American, that I did not speak Spanish, that I did not understand, that I wanted to go to the valley, and how far was it. I utilized nearly everything that was on my paper and that could assist me in seeming to converse with him. At last he wrung his hands, addressed himself to Heaven, mounted his box, and drove ahead. I hope he has repented of his profanity (if he was profane), so that we may meet in Heaven, where there will be no Spanish. Then I shall find out what it was that he wanted to tell me.

Great stress has been laid upon the value of the truth in the reports of a correspondent, yet there are times when the whole truth would jar upon the general tone or subject of a piece of work. One may not dwell upon the appearance of a new mode of hairdressing in describing a funeral, or upon the high stakes that obtain in army poker when the address of a general to the West Point cadets is the subject in hand. I was reporting Virginia politics once, during an exciting campaign, and was—in the course of the work—in a characteristically beautiful part of the Blue Ridge region. Night fell, and with it, rain. The Democratic candidate and a score of his friends, of whom I was one, repaired to a little railway station which rose out of a great plaza of liquid mud, like a lighthouse in a harbor. The great ten-acre sea of liquid mud was dimly streaked by the faint reflections of the yellow lights of the houses that stood around it. At first I could see little else than the mud and the lights, but presently I noticed a queer, floundering, wallowing, black object out in the heart of the open square. It was as if it might have been a grampus that had dropped from the clouds. It flopped about and rose and tumbled and rolled like a stranded fish of at least that size. I called the attention of my distinguished friend to it, and we splashed out to where it was. And there we found a little knot of men bending over and looking at the same thing, which was nothing less than a couple of citizens closely wrapped in one another's arms, and fighting in the mud—one under and the other on top. The rain pelted them and the mud flew as they fought and struggled, and their feet and arms were flung about. One was a distinguished Democratic leader and the other was a pillar of the Republican party. I suggested that it was a pity that they should fight, and that someone ought to interfere and bid them behave themselves. My friend then called out his name and added that he would like to know what it was all about.

"Well, sir," said the man who was on top, resting his fists while he spoke; "my name is Hazel, of Hazel Court House, Hazel County, Virginia, sir, and I am a Democrat. This man said that he agreed with everything that the Republican candidate for governor has said, and among other statements which that candidate has made are some which reflect upon a Virginian's honor, sir. These and all the other things, sir, this man has repeated and says he will stand by. That is why I'm a-licking him."

At that point there was a muddy convulsion, a splash, a twist—and the Republican was on top. Landing a neat and effective blow on the now silenced mouth of his antagonist, the man on top paused for breath, and then spoke:

"Sir," said he, "my name is Wisely, of Wiselyville, Wisely Township, and there never was a Wisely yet that wouldn't stand by his words, sir, if he died for it. And" (here he punctuated his remarks with a dig in the Democrat's ribs) "there never was a Wisely yet that was licked by a Hazel, so you can make up your mind I'll never take back what I say."

"Mr. Ralph," said my friend, "this is, as you see, a fair fight, and in this part of the country we never interfere

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in such a case, but let the best man win."

We waded back to the railway station and from that point watched the battle, in which, once again, the antagonists took the form of a submarine monster in its dying throes.

Audacious attempts to bribe a correspondent are seldom made, I think. As burglars learn the plan and contents of a house before they break into it, so the bribers, as a rule, find out the character and reputation of a man before they ask him to consider the alleged speculative character of newspaper work as applicable to himself. It is seldom that a correspondent knows the interest he excites in their minds if he is an honest man, and such a bold and direct attempt as I was once the subject of must seldom occur. It was a New York assemblyman who sought to impress me with that practical, business-like aspect which journalism wears in the view of others than myself. He did it because he liked me, he said. I was an Albany correspondent and the time was the year 1885. A corps composed of such men as George F. Spinney, Edgar L. Murlin, Hugh Hastings, and Thomas Alvord, jr., were then co-operating to expose the lobby and to defeat crooked legislation. The amount of money that the correspondents saved to the city and the State by their vigilance and shrewdness was so great, that once when they ran over the principal bills that they had caused to be defeated or abandoned, the sum total of the moneys thus saved astonished even themselves. Evidently their success greatly annoyed the thieves (if I may so characterize the men who take a practical view of legislation as the "business" of getting the right to make laws and then selling them at a profit), and one of them made bold to discuss with me the question whether the course of correspondents was wise from a worldly point of view.

He began by offering me a cigar, and then putting this question:

"Which would you rather do, take cigars from men or have cigars to give to others?"

"I do both," said I; "I take a cigar when I want one, and I give cigars to others when they want them."

"Well, which would you prefer, to take a carriage ride or own your own carriage? Very well, then, why don't you own your carriage, buy cigars by the box, and live as well as any man in Albany, with money to spare?"

"I wish I could," said I.

"Very well, then; I like you and I can do you a service. Now, there's so-and-so's bill affecting the price of gas. You are favoring it and making a fuss about the efforts of the lobby to kill it, and all that sort of thing. Stop that. Either change your tone or drop the whole matter and say nothing, and I will get you fifteen hundred dollars to-morrow morning—the price that is paid to all who help to defeat the bill. That is only a drop in the bucket to the money I can get for you as the session wears along. I will put you in the way to own a carriage and live as a man of your ability ought to live. What do you say?"

I thanked him and said, in few words, that I preferred to buy cigars one at a time for many years to come rather than drown myself at once, as I certainly would have to do after taking the money; "because," I said, "I couldn't live to let an infernal rascal like you point me out as one of your kind."

"Oh, well," said he, as little ruffled as if I had paid him an empty compliment; "every man to his liking. Go ahead and be poor, as you please."

That man, whom many who were then in Albany are able to place (for I told the story to many), was generally known for what he was. Yet he was of so much finer fibre than the rest of the raiders, and possessed so many good qualities, that he deceived most of his constituents and made others, who were not deceived, sorry for him and as lenient as possible toward him. He had one more talk with me, and it was more astonishing than the first. He called me into a cloak-room and told me that I was right in calling him a rascal. He said he had been one, and a thorough-paced one, for a long time. He had been well born and well raised, and (I think he said) he had been educated for the ministry. But when he fell in love and married and contemplated the likelihood that his wife would remain poor and be obliged to toil and to deny

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herself comforts, it was a state of things he could not face. He loved her too dearly—so he said. He thereupon resolved to earn any and every dollar that offered itself, legitimately or illegitimately, and he had done so. At this point in his story he paused, and when next he spoke, it was in a different key. He said that his life had been a hell ever since he had pursued the course he planned. He acknowledged that he felt a degree of shame, and suffered an amount of torment horrible to endure. He said that at times he had even been afraid to sleep alone, and often had called upon a young son to stay with him when his wife was away. Once more, after a pause, he changed his tone —this time to say that, notwithstanding all that he had told me, he would do precisely the same thing if he had his life to live over again, because he so loved his wife, and because his dishonesty had enabled him to save her from toil and self-denial.

My two interviews with this man are among the most extraordinary incidents of my experience as a correspondent—as the man was himself one of the most remarkable men I ever knew. Certainly, I do not believe that any other thief in the Albany Legislature ever spent a wakeful night or a moment of unhappiness on account of his stealing —except when the market quotations for votes were lower than usual.

A SIN-OFFERING.

By W. G. van Tassel Sutphen.

I HAVE hewn and builded my altar
And set it in sight of men,
And now is my hand to falter,
Must the battle be fought again?

From the height that I scarce ascended
Have I fallen to fresh offence?
How illy the rents were mended,
In my garment of penitence.

In the ashes of old transgression
Still lingers a last, dull fire,
And the shadows of past possession
Take shape to my vain desire.

The heart that I strove to harden
Is as water that runs away;
The wind in my close-kept garden
Has scattered strange seed to-day—

A trifle of purple heather,
The lilt of a minstrel's rhyme,
A day that was like June weather
In June of the olden time.

And I turn away unforgiven,
Unwilling to pay the price;
My soul, though by sharp swords riven,
Still shrinks from the sacrifice

Then take what my will denieth,
O Thou to whom all is due,
That the soul, which in sin now dieth,
May be born into life anew.

Take all, lest again uplifted,
My heart from Thee turn away,
And I, like as fine wheat sifted,
Find no longer of words to pray.

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BENEATH THE MASK.

By Howard Pyle.

With Illustration (frontispiece) by the Author.

I.

MR. STEVE CARROLL used to be known as one of the best-dressed men in New York. He was a professional gambler. He usually haunted the purlieus of the Waldemer, and on a pleasant morning, especially in the spring, you would sometimes see him standing in front of the portico where the great swinging doors swept noiselessly back and forth with the ceaselessly intermittent coming and going of men. There he would pose by the hour, one leg crossed before the other, half-leaning upon the cane which he used for a prop, the light overcoat thrown back so as to show the satin lining, and usually a carnation *boutonnière* burning in the lapel of his Prince Albert coat. He had a fine, sensitive, sallow face, clean shaved except for a small mustache, so perfectly black as to more than suggest dye, as did his smooth, well-brushed, well-trimmed hair. He looked keenly out from under his down-tilted hat brim with a pair of sharp and black, rather beady eyes, at the stream of life that came and went along the flag-paved sidewalk. Altogether there was in him the perfect type of the aimless, homeless, restless, demi-monde life to which he belonged—calm, unruffled, self-composed.

All this was Steve Carroll, as he appeared from without. What struggles and hopes and ambitions and desires moved him from within no man but himself knew, for he did not often confide his thoughts to other men. He did occasionally, it is true, retail scraps of his life to those with whom he was intimate, but those scraps were almost always in mere fragments. "You see," he would say, "the world owed me a living; and as it did not give me what it owed me, I took it from the world as I could get it;" and there was a plausibility about the statement that seemed, somehow, to excuse the wickedness of his existence. "I started out to be a lawyer," he would say again, "but I did not get along well. I had a little money in those days, but I got in with a wild set and they pretty well cleaned me out. So it seemed to me that if I was going to play cards at all with the like of them, I'd better do it systematically." Then, perhaps, he would tell how he had spent two or three months in his law-office doing nothing but shuffling and dealing cards, and then, maybe, he would show tricks of expert manipulation that were almost miraculous. No one had ever seen him use such arts, but he did not often lose at cards.

So Steve Carroll had for a long time been pretty well known to a certain set in New York.

But it was the game of poker, played in General Lucey's rooms, at the Waldemer, that made him really famous. The victim was a young fellow named Wetmore, whose father, lately deceased, had been the president of a rich watch plant in Connecticut, and the money that changed hands was a larger amount than, perhaps, any lost or gained at cards outside the walls of the Cosmopolitan Club.

The General Lucey, in whose rooms the game was played, was an ex-Confederate soldier. He had a fine, florid face, and white mustache that lent him a certain ex-military air. He was spoken of as having been a brave soldier during the war; he was in these latter days the husband of a very beautiful and notable actress whose stage name was Violet Ellsworth. As to the game of poker, it was afterward said, and with truth, that General Lucey and Steve Carroll had arranged the plucking of Mr. Wetmore between them, and that they afterward shared the spoils.

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The game was played upon a Thursday evening, and there were altogether four in the party besides Carroll and General Lucey—Wetmore (who was a young, callow-looking lad, the very picture of a pigeon); Mr. Walker-Hamley, the notable polo-player; Hamilton Stark, and John Rodman, of Rodman & White, of Wall Street. It was still rather early in the night when that famous hand was dealt—that hand that afterward made so much talk and gossip. Only Carroll, General Lucey, and Wetmore were in it. The others sat looking on, and excepting for the voices and the sharp ticking of the clock on the mantel, the room for a time seemed filled with a muffled silence. The faces of all were very serious, and the poor lad — the pigeon — was as pale as death. He held a more than strong hand—a hand that ordinarily was almost certain to win; but in spite of its strength he was frightened, and would have called the others again and again, could he have done so. But he could not—neither could he afford to lose the hand he held.

At last the cards were called, and then Carroll delivered his *coup-de-grace*, laying down his cards with a dexterous sweep. "I never happened to have that hand but twice before," said he, calmly, as he scratched a match beneath the table, and lit his cigar, which had gone out.

Wetmore did not say a word; he leaned his elbow upon the table, and his face upon his fist looking down upon the upturned cards. By and by his mouth began twitching, and then his face became distorted; there was something grotesquely tragic in its contortions and the efforts he put upon himself to suppress his emotions. For awhile no one said a word, and Carroll continued shuffling and shuffling the cards. It was Mr. Hamilton Stark who first spoke. He took out his watch and looked at it. "By Jove!" said he, "half-past ten o'clock! I nearly forgot my engagement at the club. Come along, Wetmore, I'll take you down with me," and so the party broke up.

Nothing had been directly said, yet there was a very palpable air of disapproval of what had been done. General Lucey, who, no doubt, felt this air of disapprobation, talked rather strenuously as his guests put on their overcoats, but Carroll sat calmly shuffling and shuffling the cards.

After the others had gone General Lucey sat down and took out a pencil and paper and began figuring. Presently he flicked the paper across to Carroll, who took it up and looked at it.

"How's that?" said General Lucey.

Carroll ran his eye quickly down the figures and then nodded his head, "That's all right," said he; "that's what I make my share to be."

"I'll give you my check for it as soon as the notes are settled, if that's satisfactory to you," said General Lucey.

"Yes," said Carroll, "it is."

It was the largest sum of money he had ever won at cards. As Carroll lit a fresh cigar before going, he said, "Do you know, I felt sorry for the poor devil—he took it so d——d hard."

"Pshaw!" said General Lucey, "he could stand to lose ten times that and not feel it."

"Perhaps so," said Carroll, as he puffed away with his cigar at the lighted match which burned lower and lower toward his fingers. Then, as he gave the match a quick shake and threw it into the grate, he added: "I dare say you'd laugh at me if I were to tell you that I have thought of giving up this sort of life and living respectably again." And General Lucey did laugh.

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Carroll went down the stairs. He saw Violet Ellsworth and an escort—a Mr. Denny, of Philadelphia — waiting for the elevator. The actress nodded as he passed and the gambler knew that the theatres must now be over for the night. He looked in through the glass plate of the restaurant-door and saw that the room was already filled with the bustle and glitter of the after-theatre life. Then he passed down the marble corridor and out through the swinging valves.

Cabs and coupés were passing with a ceaseless rattle and rumble. He stood for a while looking out upon the night-life of the street, with his hands in his pockets, smoking away at his cigar. Presently a very neat private coupé,

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with a well-dressed groom and neatly cropped horse, and a good deal of jingling glitter of plated chains, rattled into and passed through the area of the electric light. In the moment of passing Carroll saw and recognized a face at the window. He mentally recorded it as belonging to Sylvia Nottingham, the variety actress. At the instant of seeing the face it struck him that there was a very curious expression upon it; then he thought that maybe the expression was only the effect of the electric light—then he thought no more about it.

He did not know that he had seen a glimpse of the tragedy of another life pass by him; but so we see such a tragedy pass us every day and know nothing about it. Just then in the little padded space of the coupé there was a very bitter fragment of passion being enacted.

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The Sylvia Nottingham whose face he had seen was just then quite the rage in New York. It was a fashionable thing to make up parties of ladies and gentlemen to go to the Delamore Garden to see her dance and to hear her sing in the second act of the "Devil on Two Sticks." This was the second season through which the rage for her had lasted—unprecedentedly long for a fad of its kind.

Her real name was Louise Carpentier, and she was the daughter of a French saloon-keeper in Baxter Street. Originally she had been a minor attaché in the chorus of Wiel's Thalia Theatre. Being very handsome she had there attracted the attention of a Mr. Horace Peyton, who was a rich broker, with theatrical proclivities. It was he who took her up and pushed her fortune to its high tide. He took her to Paris, where her education was finished and where she took well. Then she came back to New York, adopted the Anglican title of Sylvia Nottingham, and made her great hit in the bat-dance, in the "Devil on Two Sticks."

She was a very striking brunette with gray eyes.

The same night that the notable game of poker was being played, Mr. Peyton came behind the scenes of the Delamore Garden. He appeared smoking a cigarette, stopping now and then to chat with an occasional chorus girl. Then he came across to where Sylvia Nottingham stood a little apart.

She made a studied pretence of not seeing him. As the light fell upon her she looked singularly charming in the dead black of her costume, with the pleats of her bat-dress falling behind her *à la Pompadour*. She tapped the floor with the point of her black, high-heeled slipper in a devil's tattoo, as the other approached. It had been a long time since Mr. Peyton had seen her to speak to her, and he read at a glance the emotions of angry pique that were passing through her heart. He laughed with a flash of his white teeth, but without taking his cigarette from his lips; he was so perfectly calm and unruffled in his manner that the half-suppressed rage of the lady burned up like fire, and she glared balefully at him with her gray eyes from under her pencilled eyebrows.

"Come, Lou," said he, "don't be disagreeable. I came to ask you to ride home with me; I have something I want to tell you."

The actress was at that time living at the Edmonton Flats. The ride home from the theatre was not a long one, and Peyton was glad of it. "See here, Lou," said he, after they had rumbled along a little distance in silence, "I may just as well be frank with you. After all there is no use beating about the bush. The long and short of it is that I am going to be married and we must part." He waited for a moment or two, and as his companion did not speak he continued: "I want to be honest and straightforward with you; I'm not going to drop you as some men would. I always expect to look after you and do the fair thing by you." Still the woman did not say anything. Just then the carriage rumbled over the pavement in front of the Waldemer and the electric light shot a hard-cut square in at the window and lit up her face, and it was terrible to see. Then the light was gone and it was dark again inside the carriage. It was that glimpse of her that Carroll had

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seen. "And how about the child?" said she, almost breathless with the terrible constraint she put upon herself.

"Oh! that's all right, I'm not going to neglect the child either. I haven't quite made up my mind yet; but I'll let you know in the course of a few days what I'll do for you and for her."

Then the pent-up rage broke loose and the woman's wrath filled the narrow, padded space with its lurid tempest. Her words grew shrill, then shriller and shriller, and Peyton pulled up the window lest the sound of her fury should attract attention. At first he was fairly overwhelmed by the fiery flood of her rage; then, by and by, he caught her by the wrist and held her tightly. "Don't you make a fool of yourself," said he, and his voice suggested a certain breathlessness of half-angry excitement. "Don't you make a fool of yourself; we've got to part some day and it might as well be now as at any other time. Look here! we are almost at the Edmonton. Now, don't go to making a scene; do you understand me?" And he gave the wrist he held a shake. The woman had ceased her voluble fury almost as soon as he had laid hold of her, and she was quiet now, only her hands trembled and she wrenched her wrist away from his hold.

"Don't you touch me," said she, hoarsely. "Here, let me out!" The coupé had stopped at the curb. Peyton got out and offered the soubrette his hand, but she struck it aside and rushed past him into the vestibule, brightly illuminated by its electric lights, and the next moment Peyton heard the sharp sound of the call-bell of the elevator. Then he got into the coupé and drove away.

No one but the woman's younger sister, Annette, who lived with her, knew what happened in the actress's apartments when the doors were closed and she let loose all that seethed within her.

Three days after, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Peyton's lawyer, called upon her. Peyton had given the man of law to understand that he had a Jezebel to deal with, but in the long interview that followed Nicholson found the woman as cool and sharp and bright as an icicle.

"Do you know, Annette," said the soubrette, when her sister came back after having seen the lawyer to the door; "do you know, Annette, I am sick and tired of this life. I'm going to live respectable."

Annette did not laugh at her sister as General Lucey had laughed at Carroll when the gambler had ventured the same sentiment; but she looked at the other out of the corner of her eye with a very queer expression.

II.

It was the height of the season at Rock Island Bay, and the Rock Island House was filled to overflowing with that more than respectably representative crowd of summer tourists that frequent our beautiful northern border of lakes and rivers and rocky islands. Rock Island is such an old-established resort that it is almost superfluous to say anything of it. Its pickerel, muscalonge, and bass fishing are not what they used to be years ago, but the lake-like spread of the St. Lawrence and the islands dotted over its surface are just as they always were, except here and there where some private summer residence covers the little rocky hump, its garish white and yellow façade gleaming among the hemlocks.

At this particular year there were two guests at the hotel who were especially interesting to the others. One was a General Neville, one time of the Confederate Army, and the other a Mrs. Hurlbutt, a very young and very blond widow, apparently of twenty-four or twenty-five. They had come up the river from Quebec about ten days before, and had brought their romance along with them.

The General's devotion was very palpable. It displayed itself in a simple, quiet, unobtrusive, gentlemanly fashion, but he made no secret of it, and it was clear to all. He was, if not a handsome, a singularly fine-looking man. His hair and mustache, with its old-fashioned goatee, were almost more than iron-gray, and his eyes were black and full of fire. In spite of that fire, however, they were almost excessively

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quiet and self-contained. He did not talk a great deal about his military experiences, though it was known that he had led his brigade in the right of Pickett's famous charge at the battle of Gettysburg, and that the brigade had been nearly cut to pieces by Stannard's Vermonters.

So far as could be seen the General's marked attention made no impression upon Mrs. Hurlbutt. She was very young, even for her apparent age, and was palpably very innocent. It did not seem to occur to her that General Neville felt for her anything more than a sort of paternal kindness; he certainly looked old enough to be her father. She was very gay, very vivacious, and sung light French songs with delightful brilliancy and snap, and in a light, jocund voice peculiarly adapted to them. But now and then came periods of repose, and in the absence of the flitting emotions that gave to her expression a certain butterfly life, it assumed sometimes a look introspective beyond what one would have thought possible in one so young and so innocent. She came to the hotel with a nurse, and a little child with black eyes, a Frenchified bang, and long, curling hair. The little girl was, perhaps, six years old. She was rather pretty, but thin and eager-looking, and had a dark, sallow face. She was always dressed in a certain foreign fashion that smacked of an un-American life.

It was well known that Mrs. Hurlbutt was, if not rich, at least in very comfortable circumstances, and from what she said it was easy to gather that she had lived mostly abroad with her husband, who had died in Southern France—a man far past the prime of life—older even than General Neville, who was in a certain sense distinctly in his prime.

In spite of the difference of their ages, all the hotel society felt that the two were eminently well fitted for one another, both in position and estate; for it was known that General Neville was also in more than comfortable circumstances. Everyone hoped that the honest, simple-minded soldier might be successful in his suit.

Little Madeline Hurlbutt was devoted to him. She was with him whenever and wherever it was possible; she clung to his hand or to his clothes, and followed him with that certain dog-like and somewhat oppressive fidelity of devotion belonging to children. But General Neville did not appear to feel any oppression in this rather excessive manifestation of love. He seemed to like it very much. "Madeline!" her mother would say, at times almost sharply, "you must go away and let General Neville alone. You will bore him with your attentions."

"Madam," the General would say, in his courtly fashion, "do not send the little child away, I love to feel the atmosphere of her innocence around me." Ordinarily one would not call Madeline an especially innocent child, but General Neville's simplicity was just of the kind that would see simplicity and innocence in everyone. It was no wonder that the romance of those two should have interested the guests at Rock Island House, or that both the simple-minded General and the innocent young widow should be extremely popular.

There was a hop at the hotel. The General did not dance, he sat upon a chair on the darkened porch close to one of the tall open windows, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, looking in upon the brightly lighted parlor at the dancing. The light shone upon his face and lit it out faintly but strongly against the dark night, with dim lights and blackly cut shadows. A military company had come up from Chippaway and were stopping at the hotel. They wore huge bearskin shakos, and they had drilled just after supper on the porch. They had brought a very good band with them, and it was now making the music for the dancing. The company wore a uniform with a great deal of gold braid, and they lit up the dancing crowd very brilliantly. Mrs. Hurlbutt was dancing with one of them, a tall young fellow with a mustache and goatee trimmed about his mouth, and his cheeks shaved to a blue smoothness.

General Neville watched the couple as they slid in and out among the

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restless crowd swaying to the music. Presently little Madeline Hurlbutt came out on the porch. She looked languid and tired, and her nurse was not with her. She came up to where General Neville sat and leaned against him. He turned his face toward her, "What's the matter, Madeline?" said he.

"I'm tired," said she, in a sleepy voice. He took her up on his knee and she laid her head on his shoulder and went to sleep. Presently the sound of the waltz ceased and the dancers came pouring out on the porch, the ladies fanning themselves vigorously. One of the ladies stopped with her partner, close to General Neville.

"Poor little thing," said she, looking at Madeline, "she looks dreadfully tired and sleepy."

The General also looked down at the sleeping face, with the long lashes lying upon the white cheeks, and he smiled ever so faintly and quietly under his mustache. Almost immediately a crowd gathered around the General and the sleeping child.

"Don't you dance, General?" said one of the men; it was the Captain of the Chippaway company.

"Oh, no!" said he, "my dancing days were over long ago. A gunshot wound puts a stop to all that sort of thing." He spoke in his usual quiet, easy voice.

"Tell us something about your adventures in the war, won't you, General?" said one of the young ladies.

Again General Neville smiled faintly. "Well, this is hardly the time to tell a story, besides I shouldn't know what to tell you. There isn't much romance in war-making, you know."

"How did it feel when you were wounded?" asked another one of the young ladies.

"It felt exactly as if someone had struck me with a brick," answered he. "And it knocked me down just as if a brick had struck me."

"Where were you wounded?" asked the Captain of the Chippaway company.

"At Gettysburg. You see, Captain, I was on the wrong side of the fence then, I was a Johnny Rebel. I was leading my regiment of Pickett's division in its charge on the stone fence, and doing all that I could to capture the good city of Philadelphia. I was shot just after we had captured the battery, just back of the wall." General Neville spoke almost with a deprecating reluctance, but other questions followed, and bit by bit the ex-soldier dropped out the story of that memorable charge as he had seen it.

The music had begun to play again, but the little group around remained there listening to him. Mrs. Hurlbutt also had stopped. She stood a little distance back behind the others. She was listening silently; the noise of the music was loud, and someone closed the window. Never did General Neville appear more honest, more simple, more noble than he did now, surrounded with that circle of intent young girl faces as he told so quietly how he had fought at Gettysburg. "You see," said he, "no one thinks of the danger in a charge like that, or rather, you do think about it but it does not make you afraid. The only thing is that you want to get it over as quickly as possible, just as you want to get in out of a rain-storm. There was the stone fence before us and the battery behind it, and there were the Vermonters firing upon our flank and enfilading us from right to left. The men kept dropping all around, and as we got near the fence we began to run so as to get it over as quickly as possible. I jumped over the wall along with the first, and there we were in a crowd of the blue coats.

"It was a burning hot day, and I can see now just how red and sweaty and dirty their faces were. It was all confusion, just as it would be in a street fight, only they were shooting and striking with muskets. I saw a young fellow in blue trousers and white shirt just about to strike at me with his musket, and I shot at him with my revolver.

"I saw him drop, but I don't know whether I killed him or not. I thought of his mother and was very sorry, but there was little time to think about that then. They broke away on all sides of us and began running, and we ran after them right up into the battery. I was just past the guns when I felt as if

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someone had struck me with a brick. I fell down on my face and then I crawled under the wheels of a gun, so that they would not tread on me. There was another of our fellows there. He had bare feet. He was shot in the shoulder. We laid there quiet for a while, and then by and by my companion said, 'Well, we'll git some coffee now, anyhow;' that was after our men had been driven back."

Those who listened laughed at the *dénouement*, and then the party broke up; then the window was opened again and the music poured out in great volume. Just then Mrs. Hurlbutt's maid came out looking for the little girl.

"Here is Madeline, Annette," called Mrs. Hurlbutt, and then to General Neville: "It is a shame to let her burden you, General;" and she spoke very softly and tenderly. The ex-soldier looked down at the sleeping child with his peculiar grave and gentle smile. "She does not burden me, Mrs. Hurlbutt," said he, quietly; "I love to feel her freshness near me," and he touched her cheeks very lightly with his lips.

The maid took Madeline from him; the child whimpered, sleepily. Then Mrs. Hurlbutt sat down, fanning herself. Her partner lingered a moment and then bowed and left her. She still continued fanning herself, though she was no longer warm.

"Why don't you go in and dance some more, Mrs. Hurlbutt?" said the General. "I love to see you enjoying yourself. You have a happy disposition, your life must have been a happy life."

Mrs. Hurlbutt stopped fanning herself. "No," said she, abruptly, "I have not had a happy life." There was a long pause; it seemed as though she had it on her mind to say something. She began nervously picking at the feathers of her fan. "I have had trouble, so much trouble—if you only knew—if I dared to tell you." She ceased speaking again, but she still picked nervously at her fan.

General Neville looked steadily at her, waiting for her to resume, but she did not say any more. Presently he said in his quiet, even voice, "If I could be of any help to you—I—I would be very glad. I wish I could help you, I wish I could be of use to you. I wish—I would do anything—to make you happy." He spoke so softly that she could hardly hear the words. They were almost caressing in their sympathy. He looked at her in silence; her face was turned away, he could see that her bosom was rising and falling tumultuously.

Just then a young fellow, one of the guests of the hotel, came abruptly upon them. "Oh, Mrs. Hurlbutt," said he, "I have been looking for you everywhere; you promised me this dance, you know."

Immediately after the dance Mrs. Hurlbutt went to her room, she flung herself violently down upon the sofa, and then sat there inert and listless, her eyes fixed intently and vacantly, one hand still holding her fan, the other lying palm upward upon her lap. Her maid bustled in and out from one room to the other, but Mrs. Hurlbutt did not look at her. Suddenly the maid broke the silence. "Well," said she, "you've certainly caught him—you've got him hooked tight."

The other looked at her swiftly but without moving her body. "Don't you speak to me, Annette!" said she, in a low voice that was almost fierce in its intensity; and then, after an instant's pause, she said, in the same low, harsh voice, "By God! I wish I was dead!"

III.

Next morning after the hop quite a large picnic party which had been built up, so to speak, around General Neville and Mrs. Hurlbutt, went out to enjoy itself. It was one of those summer mornings such as you only find up along the St. Lawrence—warm but sparklingly, almost vividly bright. There were maybe twenty or thirty in the picnic party. They took fishing lines and boats and guides, and had hired a steam-launch for the day. The little launch, gay with its striped awning and its fluttering flag, puffing and wheezing laboriously, steamed away from the wharf in front of the hotel with the line of fishing-boats, each manned by its guide, trailing

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after it. A crowd of ladies and gentlemen in nondescript costumes of flannel and corduroy sat packed under the awning, together with baskets and hampers, and shawls and waterproofs.

General Neville sat beside Mrs. Hurlbutt; little Madeline had seated herself, half upon his lap and half upon the seat. He pointed over the gunwale of the boat down through the liquid crystal of the water to the waving gardens of water-grasses below—brown, dull red, and green, in which the fish hovered like birds. Mrs. Hurlbutt was peculiarly silent; she paid no attention either to the General or to the child; she sat with her hands clasped listlessly in her lap, looking steadily out across the smooth, bright face of the water, through the distant vistas that opened and closed again between the wooded islands.

The destination of the picnickers was Cliff Island, a famous place for such parties. Cliff Island looked out upon one side, from under its brow of clustering trees, with its beetling, shaggy cliff-face upon the broad width of the St. Lawrence. Upon the other side was a little bay almost enclosed by the sloping rocky shore, overhung in places with the soft, cool foliage of the birch-trees, with here and there a touch of dark hemlock. An island—a rocky mass of bloom—blocked the entrance to the bay. It was an ideal spot for picnicking.

The launch came to a standstill, the picnickers were landed, scattering here and there and this way and that way, some to the fishing, some to prospecting, some to wandering, and some to look after the dinner baskets and hampers. General Neville remained ever close to Mrs. Hurlbutt. She was still under the shadow of the mood that had brooded over her all the morning—silent, absent, inattentive to the life about her. General Neville watched her covertly. Little Madeline clung close to him, holding one of his fingers clasped in her hand.

They had wandered aimlessly along the rocky shore and apart from the rather emphatic laughing and talking of the others.

"Would you not like to sit down and rest?" said General Neville, presently. His voice was very tender, almost paternal. "You look very tired this morning," he added; "are you not well?"

"I did not sleep very well last night," said she, briefly.

She sat down upon the flat surface of rock that overlooked the little bay. There were two or three fishing-boats a short distance from the shore; the occupants were fishing diligently, but without much apparent luck. Still neither the General nor the young widow spoke, and little Madeline played in her quiet, quaint, old-fashioned manner around the rocks that at this place rose abruptly twelve or fourteen feet from the stony, shingled beach. The child persistently wandered close to the edge of this bluff. Her mother sat absent, almost moody, and paid no attention to her whatever. Twice General Neville called to the little girl—"Madeline, don't go so close to the edge of the rock, you'll fall over if you're not careful." But Mrs. Hurlbutt did not move or turn her head. She seemed lost in the singular silence that had held her all the day.

Neither spoke for some time, until at last General Neville broke the silence. "Mrs. Hurlbutt," said he, "you spoke to me last night about troubles and misfortunes in your life. I think it was almost upon your mind to tell me what they were. I don't want to invite your confidence." [He spoke very quietly.] But if I can be of aid to you—if I can help you in any way, it would make me very happy."

He had been looking rather studiously away as he spoke, now he looked at her with a swift glance of his keen black eyes. She evidently felt a return of that agitation that had swept through her the night before. Her bosom was rising and falling as it had then done—tumultuously, agitatedly, but she did not speak.

"Do you know that I—I love you?" said General Neville at last.

Would she have spoken? Perhaps not. Who is there that has had experiences would dare to strip the soul naked at such a time? She sat with her face turned away; her color came and went; she did not withdraw the hand he had taken. For the moment of tense and breathless silence that followed, the noise of distant voices, the sharp rattle

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of an oar, the whispering rush of the soft wind through the flickering leaves, sounded singularly loud and distinct.

Suddenly, at a little distance there was a rattle of loose earth and stones. General Neville turned his head sharply just in time to see the glint of a white dress. There was a sharp piping cry and then instantly the dull, soft thud of a falling body.

General Neville sprang to his feet. Had he seen it, or was it by a terrible intuition that he knew what had happened? "My God!" he cried. "That was Madeline, she must have fallen!"

He ran to the edge of the rocks and looked over; a little white figure was lying upon its side on the rocks below like a broken mass—perfectly still, perfectly motionless. In a moment he was over the edge of the little cliff, hanging, dropping to the rocks beneath, stumbling, falling, rolling over. He was up in a moment, scrambling over the rocks, and then he bent over the child. She was lying between two of the rocks upon a mass of broken cobbles. "Madeline!" he cried, breathless and panting—"Madeline, are you hurt?" But there was no reply. Her eyes were opened and upturned, her lips were parted, and even as he looked he saw a red stain between them. He could not see that she was breathing. A terrible piercing pang shot through him. "My God! is she dead?" he whispered to himself. He lifted the little figure in his arms—was there a dent in the side of the head?

The time between the picnic grounds and reaching the hotel seemed to be both very long and very short. The child lay perfectly still, only just breathing. The mother's grief was dreadful. General Neville did not go near the little group in the stern where the child lay; he stood holding tight to the stanchion and looking out ahead, silent and grim.

All that day the tragedy of the accident hung over the hotel like a cloud. The guests talked in whispers, and there was no music played that evening.

General Neville stood at the end of the hotel porch looking out across the mysterious stretch of waters, and into the hollow vault of night beyond, sparkling with its dust of stars. He was living over for the fiftieth time all that had happened that morning. Suddenly there was a swift movement, and when he looked he saw that Mrs. Hurlbutt stood beside him. "General Neville," said she, and she spoke with a voice so breathless and agitated, so hoarse and so dry, that even in the silence he could hardly hear it. In those strained and husky tones there was an echo of the blast that must have swept through her that day—terror, grief, and an agony of despairing hope. At such times the world and all that belongs to it is nothing, and the travail of the straining, suffering soul is everything. "General Neville, I can't cheat you," she said; "I've tried to cheat you, but God Almighty has punished me and I can't do it. Look here!" She seized her blond hair convulsively as she spoke, and in the night he saw her lift it a little distance from her head. It was a wig. "I'm not Mrs. Hurlbutt," said the poor woman, hoarsely; "my name is Louise Carpentier, and I am the variety actress that they call Sylvia Nottingham."

There was a time of dead and perfect silence. Suddenly General Neville gave a short and helpless laugh, but there was not anything of lightness in it. "Your face was familiar to me," he said, "but I could not place it. I know you very well now. I wonder that you don't know me, too. I'm Steve Carroll the gambler. I've shaved my mustache and cut my hair, and let them grow again without dyeing them. That's all."

There was another time of silence. They stood close to one another, their faces glimmered pallidly in the star-lit night.

"The fact is," said Carroll, "we've both of us made a mistake. I wanted to get an heiress if I could—to marry her if she'd have me, and then to be respectable again. I suppose you've been trying to play something of the same sort of game. We've both of us played it close enough, but neither of us held the hand to win against our own luck."

Again there was a long time of silence. "After all," said the actress, after a while of thinking—"why shouldn't we"—then she stopped short. Then she began again, "Why shouldn't we?" Then

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stopped short again. She could not form her words.

"Why shouldn't we marry one another after all?" said Carroll. "Is that what you are trying to say?" He could see in the darkness that she nodded her head. He gave a short laugh. "Well, that would hardly pay," said he; "we're neither of us exactly what we hoped to get when we set out to look for a wife and a husband. You're still thinking of General Neville, and not of Steve Carroll."

Then the actress asked: "But that battle you told about, that was real, wasn't it?"

Carroll laughed.

"No," said he, "that was a story of my friend, General Lucey's."

"What," said she, "old Jimmy Lucey, Violet Ellsworth's husband?"

Carroll nodded, and for the third time there was a space of silence. In the sharp turn of their emotions they had almost forgotten the terrible tragedy that loomed big and black in the background. Suddenly Carroll asked, "How's Madeline?"

"She's pretty bad," said the actress, in a quavering voice. "Oh! I'm afraid, I'm afraid,"—she could say no more.

Carroll took her by the arm very kindly. "There — there!" said he, "never mind," and it was all the word of comfort he could find to speak.

The next day General Neville left the hotel. Important letters, he said, had called him to New York.

Madeline died. Her mother wrote to Carroll telling him of it. "After all," said the soubrette, at the end of her letter, "it is better for her and all of us."

A SONG.

WITH A RED ROSE ON HER BIRTHDAY.

By Robert Bridges.

What the Rose thought:

Oh, to be one-and-twenty!
But I am a rose that must bloom for a day,
My life is like color and perfume in May;
To-night I shall fade in her beautiful hair,
And touch with my petals her proud neck and fair.
Oh, to be one-and-twenty!

What She sang, exultingly:

Oh, to be one-and-twenty!
To feel that the glorious days of my youth
Are only the promise of hope, love, and truth—
That all joyful things in my bright future gleam,
And I am to *live* them and find out my dream.
Oh, to be one-and-twenty!

What He wrote, sadly:

Oh, to be one-and-twenty!
To dream that the great world is still all my own,
And cherish again the ideals that have flown;
To follow them, hiding with cunning and art,
And find them all sleeping within her warm heart,
Her heart that is one-and-twenty!

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TIEMANN'S TO TUBBY HOOK.

By H. C. Bunner.

IF you ever were a decent, healthy boy, or if you can make believe that you once were such a boy, you must remember that you were once in love with a girl a great deal older than yourself. I am not speaking of the big school-girl with whom you thought you were in love, for one little while—just because she wouldn't look at you, and treated you like a little boy. *She* had, after all, but a tuppenny temporary superiority to you; and, after all, in the bottom of your irritated little soul, you knew it. You knew that, proud beauty that she was, she might have to lower her colors to her little sister before that young minx got into the first class and —comparatively—long dresses.

No, I am talking of the girl you loved who was not only really grown up and too old for you, but grown up almost into old-maidhood, and too old perhaps for anyone. She was not, of course, quite an old maid, but she was so nearly an old maid as to be out of all active competition with her juniors—which permitted her to be her natural, simple self, and to show you the real charm of her womanhood. Neglected by the men, not yet old enough to take to coddling young girls after the manner of motherly old maids, she found a hearty and genuine pleasure in your boyish friendship, and you—you adored her. You saw, of course, as others saw, the faded dulness of her complexion; you saw the wee crow's-feet that gathered in the corners of her eyes when she laughed; you saw the faint touches of white among the crisp little curls over her temples; you saw that the keenest wind of Fall brought the red to her cheeks only in two bright spots, and that no soft Spring air would ever bring her back the rosy, pink flush of girlhood: you saw these things as others saw them—no, indeed, you did not; you saw them as others could not, and they only made her the more dear to you. And you were having one of the best and most valuable experiences of your boyhood, to which you may look back now, whatever life has brought you, with a smile that has in it nothing of regret, of derision, or of bitterness.

Suppose that this all happened long ago—that you had left a couple of quarter-posts of your course of three-score-years-and-ten between that young lover and your present self; and suppose that the idea came to you to seek out and revisit this dear faded memory. And suppose that you were foolish enough to act upon the idea, and went in search of her and found her—not the wholesome, autumn-nipped comrade that you remembered, a shade or two most frostily touched by the winter of old age—but a berouged, beraddled, bedizened old make-believe, with wrinkles plastered thick, and skinny shoulders dusted white with powder—ah me, how you would wish you had not gone!

And just so I wished that I had not gone, when, the other day, I was tempted back to revisit the best beloved of all the homes of my nomadic boyhood.

I remembered four pleasant years of early youth when my lot was cast in a region that was singularly delightful and grateful and lovable, although the finger of death had already touched its prosperity and beauty beyond all re-quickening.

It was a fair countryside of upland and plateau, lying between a majestic hill-bordered river and an idle, wandering, marshy, salt creek that flowed almost side by side with its nobler companion for several miles before they came together at the base of a steep,

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rocky height, crowned with thick woods. This whole country was my playground, a strip some four or five miles long, and for the most of the way a mile wide between the two rivers, with the rocky, wooded eminence for its northern boundary.

In the days when the broad road that led from the great city was a famous highway, it had run through a country of comfortable farm-houses and substantial old-fashioned mansions standing in spacious grounds of woodland and meadow. These latter occupied the heights along the great river, like a lofty breastwork of aristocracy, guarding the humbler tillers of the soil in the more sheltered plains and hollows behind them. The extreme north of my playground had been, within my father's easy remembering, a woodland wild enough to shelter deer; and even in my boyhood there remained patches of forest where once in a while the sharp-eyed picked up gun-flints and brass buttons that had been dropped among those very trees by the marauding soldiery of King George III. of tyrannical memory. There were no deer there when I was a boy. Deer go naturally with a hardy peasantry, and not naturally, perhaps, but artificially, with the rich and great. But deer cannot coexist with a popula-

tion composed of what we call "People of Moderate Means." It is not in the eternal fitness of things that they should.

For, as I first knew our neighborhood, it was a suburb as a physical fact only. As a body politic, we were a part of the great city, and those twin demons of encroachment, Taxes and Assessments, had definitively won in their battle with both the farmers and the country-house gentry. To the south, the farms had been wholly routed out of existence. A few of the old family estates were kept up after a fashion, but it was only as the officers of a defeated garrison are allowed to take their own time about leaving their quarters. Along the broad highway some of them lingered, keeping up a poor pretence of disregarding new grades and levels, and of not seeing the little shanties that squatted under their very windows, or the more offensive habitations of a more pretentious poverty that began to range themselves here and there in serried blocks.

Poor people of moderate means! Nobody wants you, except the real estate speculator, and he wants you only to empty your light pockets for you, and to leave you to die of cheap plumbing in the poor little sham of a house that he builds to suit your moderate means and his immoderate greed. Nowhere are you welcome, except where contractors are digging new roads and blasting rocks and filling sunken lots with ashes and tin cans. The random goat of poverty browses on the very confines of the scanty, small settlement of cheap gentility where you and your neighbors—people of moderate means like yourself—huddle together in your endless, unceasing struggle for a home and self-respect. You know that your smug, mean little house, tricked out with machine-made scroll-work, and insufficiently clad in two coats of ready-mixed paint, is an eyesore to the poor old gentleman who has sold you a corner of his father's estate to build it on. But there it is—the whole hard business of life for the poor—for the big poor and the little poor, and the unhappiest of all, the moderately poor. *He* must sell strip after strip of the grounds his father laid out with such loving and far-looking pride. *You* must buy your narrow strip from him, and raise thereon your tawdry little house, calculating the cost of every inch of construction in hungry anxiety of mind. And then you must sit down in your narrow front-room to stare at the squalid shanty of the poor man who has squatted right in your sight, on the land condemned for the new avenue; to wish that the street might be cut through and the unsightly hovel taken away—and then to groan

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in sprit as you think of the assessment you must pay when the street *is* cut through.

And yet you must live, oh, people of moderate means! You have your loves and your cares, your tastes and your ambitions, your hopes and your fears, your griefs and your joys, just like the people whom you envy and the people who envy you. As much as any of them, you have the capacity for pain and for pleasure, for loving and for being loved, that gives human beings a right to turn the leaves of the book of life and spell out its lesson for themselves. I know this; I know it well; I was beginning to find it out when I first came to that outpost suburb of New York, in the trail of your weary army.

But I was a boy then, and no moderateness of earthly means could rob me of my inheritance in the sky and the woods and the fields, in the sun and the snow and the rain and the wind, and in every day's weather, of which there never was any kind made that has not some delight in it to a healthful body and heart. And on this inheritance I drew such great, big, liberal, whacking drafts that, I declare, to this very day, some odd silver pieces of the resultant spending-money keep turning up, now and then, in forgotten pockets of my mind.

The field of my boyish activity was practically limited by the existing conditions of the city's growth. With each year there was less and less temptation to extend that field southward. The Bloomingdale Road, with its great arching willows, its hospitable old road-houses withdrawn from the street and hidden far down shady lanes that led riverward—the splendid old highway retained something of its charm; but day by day the gridiron system of streets encroached upon it, and day by day the shanties and the cheap villas crowded in along its sides, between the old farmsteads and the country-places. And then it led only to the raw and unfinished Central Park, and to the bare waste and dreary fag-end of a New York that still looked upon Union Square as an uptown quarter. Besides that, the lone scion of respectability who wandered too freely about the region just below Manhattanville, was apt to get his head most beautifully punched at the hands of some predatory gang of embryonic toughs from the shanties on the line of the aqueduct.

That is how our range—mine and the

other boys'—was from Tiemann's to Tubby Hook; that is, from where ex-Mayor Tiemann's fine old house, with its long conservatories, sat on the edge of the Manhattanville bluff and looked down into the black mouths of the chimneys of the paint-works that had paid for its building, up to the little inn near the junction of Spuyten Duyvil Creek and the Hudson River. Occasionally, of course, the delight of the river front tempted us farther down. There was an iron-mill down there (if that is the proper name for a place where they make pig-iron), whose operations were a perpetual joy to boyhood's heart. The benevolent lovers of the picturesque who owned this mill had a most entrancing way of making their castings late in the afternoon, so as to give a boy a chance to coast or skate, an hour after school closed, before it was time to slip down to the grimy building on the river's bank, and peer through the arched doorway into the great, dark, mysterious cavern with its floor of sand marked out in a pattern of trenches that looked as if they had been made by some gigantic double-toothed comb—a sort of right-angled herring-bone pattern. The darkness gathered outside, and deepened still faster within

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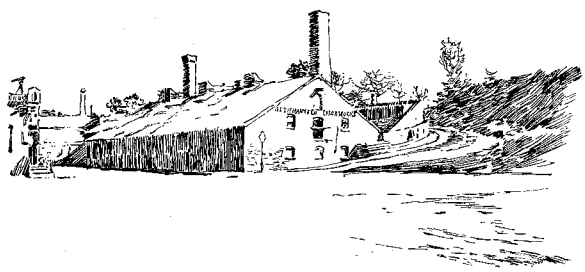
that gloomy, smoke-blackened hollow. The workmen, with long iron rods in their hands, moved about with the cautious, expectant manner of men whose duty brings them in contact with a daily danger. They stepped carefully about, fearful of injuring the regular impressions in the smooth sand, and their looks turned ever with a certain anxiety to the great black furnace at the northern end of the room, where every now and then, at the foreman's order, a fiery eye would open itself for inspection and close sullenly, making everything seem more dark than it was



before. At last—sometimes it was long to wait—the eye would open, and the foreman, looking into it, would nod; and then a thrill of excitement ran through the workmen at their stations and the boys in the big doorway; and suddenly a huge red mouth opened beneath the eye, and out poured the mighty flood of molten iron, glowing with a terrible, wonderful, dazzling color that was neither white nor red, nor rose nor yellow, but that seemed to partake of them all, and yet to be strangely different from any hue that men can classify or name. Down it flowed upon the sanded floor, first into the broad trench in front of the furnace, then down the long dorsals of the rectangular herring-bones, spreading out as it went into the depressions to right and left, until the mighty pattern of fire shone in its full length and breadth on the floor of sand; and the workmen, who had been coaxing the sluggish, lava-like flood along with their iron rods, rested from their labors and wiped their hot brows, while a thin cloud of steamy vapor floated up to the begrimed rafters. Standing in the doorway we could watch the familiar pattern—the sow and pigs, it was called—die down to a dull rose red, and then we would hurry away before blackness came upon it and wiped it clean out of memory and imagination.

Below the foundry, too, there was a point of land whereon were certain elevations and depressions of turf-covered earth that were by many, and most certainly by me, supposed to be the ruins of a Revolutionary fort. I have heard long and warm discussions of the nature and history of these mounds and trenches, and I believe the weight of authority was against the theory that they were earthworks thrown up to oppose the passage of a British fleet. But they were good enough earthworks for a boy.

Just above Tiemann's, on the lofty, protrudent corner made by the dropping of the high-road into the curious transverse valley, or swale, which at 125th Street crosses Manhattan Island from east to west, stood, at the top of a steep lawn, a mansion imposing still in spite of age, decay, and sorry days. The great Ionic columns of the portico, which stood the whole height and breadth of the front, were cracked in their length, and rotten in base and capital. The white and yellow paint was faded and blistered. Below the broad flight of crazy front-steps the grass grew rank in the gravel walk, and died out in brown, withered patches on the lawn, where only plantain and sorrel throve. It was a sad and shabby old house enough, but even the patches of newspaper here and there on its broken window-panes could not take away a certain simple, old-fashioned dignity from its weather-beaten face.

Here, the boys used to say, the Crazy Woman lived; but she was not crazy. I knew the old lady well, and at one time we were very good friends. She was the last daughter of an old, once prosperous family; a woman of bright, even brilliant mind, unhinged by misfortune, disappointment, loneliness, and the horrible fascination which an inherited load of litigation exercised upon her. The one diversion of her declining years was

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to let various parts and portions of her premises, on any ridiculous terms that might suggest themselves, to any tenants that might offer; and then to eject the lessee, either on a nice point of law or on general principles, precisely as she saw fit. She was almost invariably successful in this curious game, and when she was not, she promptly made friends with her victorious tenant, and he usually ended by liking her very much.

Her family, if I remember rightly, had distinguished itself in public service. It was one of those good old American houses where the men-children are born with politics in their veins—that is, with an inherited sense of citizenship, and a conscious pride in bearing their share in the civic burden. The young man just out of college, who has got a job at writing editorials on the Purification of Politics, is very fond of alluding to such men as "indurated professional office-holders." But the good old gentleman who pays the young ex-collegian's bills sometimes takes a great deal of pleasure—in his stupid, old-fashioned way—in uniting with his fellow-merchants of the Swamp or Hanover Square, to subscribe to a testimonial to some one of the best abused of these "indurated" sinners, in honor of his distinguished services in lowering some tax-rate, in suppressing some nuisance, in establishing some new municipal safeguard to life or property. This blood in her may, in some measure, account for the vigor and enthusiasm with which this old lady expressed her sense of the loss the community had sustained in the death of President Lincoln, in April of 1865.

Summoning two or three of us youngsters, and a dazed Irish maid fresh from Castle Garden and a three weeks' voyage in the steerage of an ocean steamer, she led us up to the top of the house, to one of those vast old-time garrets that might have been—and in country inns occasionally were—turned into ball-rooms, with the aid of a few lights and sconces. Here was stored the accumulated garmenture of the household for generation upon generation; and as far as I could discover, every member of that family had been born into a profound mourning that had continued unto his or her latest day, unmitigated save for white shirts and petticoats. These we bore down by great armfuls to the front portico, and I remember that the operation took nearly an hour. When at length we had covered the shaky warped floor of the long porch with the strange heaps of black and white—linens, cottons, silks, bombazines, alpacas, ginghams, every conceivable fabric, in fashion or out of fashion, that could be bleached white or dyed black, the old lady arranged us in working order, and, acting at once as directress and chief worker, with incredible quickness and dexterity she rent these varied and multiform pieces of raiment into broad strips, which she ingeniously twisted, two or three together, stitching them at the ends to

other sets of strips, until she had formed immensely long rolls of black and white. Mounting a tall ladder, with the help of the strongest and oldest of her assistants, she wound the great tall white columns with these strips, fastening them in huge spirals from top to bottom, black and white entwined. Then she hung ample festoons between the pillars, and contrived something painfully ambitious in the

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way of rosettes for the cornice and frieze.

Then we all went out in the street and gazed at the work of our hands. The rosettes were a failure, and the old lady admitted it. I have forgotten whether she said they looked "mangy," or "measly," or "peaky;" but she conveyed her idea in some such graphic

phrase. But I must ask you to believe me when I tell you that, from the distant street, that poor, weather-worn old front seemed to have taken on the very grandeur of mourning, with its great, clean, strong columns simply wreathed in black and snowy white, that sparkled a little here and there in the fitful, cold, spring sunlight. Of course, when you drew near to it, it resolved itself into a bewildering and somewhat indecent confusion of black petticoats, and starched shirts, and drawers, and skirts, and baby-clothes, and chemises, and dickies, and neck-cloths, and handkerchiefs, all twisted up into the most fantastic trappings of woe that ever decked a genuine and patriotic grief. But I am glad, for myself, that I can look at it all now from even a greater distance than the highway at the foot of the lawn.

I must admit that, even in my day, the shops and houses of the Moderate Means colony had so fringed the broad highway with their trivial, commonplace, weakly pretentious architecture, that very little of the distinctive character of the old road was left. Certainly, from Tiemann's to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum—about two miles of straight road—there was little that had any saving grace of honorable age, except here and there where some pioneer shanty had squatted itself long enough ago to have acquired a pleasant look of faded shabbiness. The tavern and the stage-office, it is true, kept enough of their old appearance to make a link between those days and the days when swarms of red-faced drovers, with big woollen comfortables about their big necks, and with fat, greasy, leather wallets stuffed full of bank-notes, gathered noisily there, as it was their wont to gather at all the "Bull's Head Taverns" in and around New York. The omnibuses that crawled out from New York were comparatively modern — that is, a Broadway 'bus rarely got more than ten or fifteen years beyond the period of positive decrepitude without being shifted to the Washington Heights line. But under the big shed around the corner still stood the great old George-Washington coach—a structure about the size and shape of a small canal-boat, with the most beautiful patriotic pictures all over it, of which I only remember Lord Cornwallis surrendering his sword in the politest and most theatrical manner imaginable, although the poignancy of his feelings had apparently turned his scarlet uniform to a pale orange. This magnificent equipage was a trifle rheumaticky about its underpinning, but, drawn by four, six, or eight horses, it still took the road on holidays; and in winter, when the sleighing was unusually fine, with its wheels transformed into sectional runners like a gigantic bob-sled, it swept majestically out upon the road, where it towered above the flock of flying cutters whose bells set the air a-jingle from Bloomingdale to King's Bridge.

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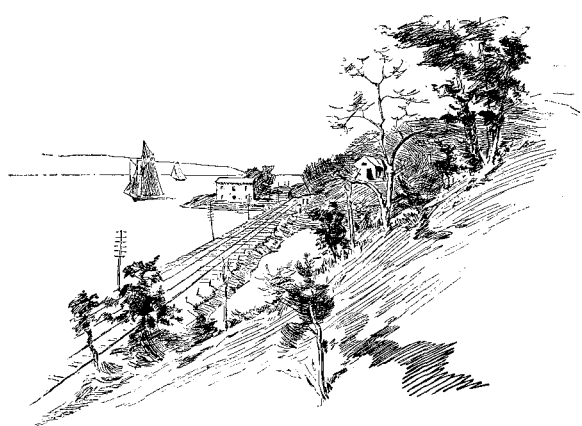
But if the beauty of Broadway as a country high-road had been marred by its adaptation to the exigencies of a suburb of moderate means, we boys felt the deprivation but little. To right and to left, as we wandered northward, five minutes' walk would take us into a country of green lanes and meadows and marshland and woodland; where houses and streets were as yet too few to frighten away that kindly old Dame Nature who was always so glad to see us. If you turned to the right—to the east, that is — you found the laurel-bordered fields where we played base-ball—I don't mean that the fields sprouted with laurels for us boys in those old days of 29 to 34 scores, but that the *Kalmia latifolia* crowned the gray rocks that cropped out all around. Farther up was the wonderful and mysterious old house of Madame Jumel—Aaron Burr's Madame Jumel—set apart from all other houses by its associations with the fierce vindictive passions of that strange old woman, whom, it seems to me, I can still vaguely remember, seated very stiff and upright in her great old family carriage. At the foot of the heights, on this side, the Harlem River flowed between its marshy margins to join Spuyten Duyvil Creek—the Harlem with its floats and boats and bridges and ramshackle docks, and all the countless delights of a boating river. Here also was a certain dell, half-way up the heights overlooking McComb's Dam Bridge, where countless violets grew around a little spring, and where there was a real cave, in which, if real pirates had not left their treasure, at least real tramps had slept and left a real smell. And on top of the cave there was a stone which was supposed to retain the footprint of a pre-historic Indian. From what I remember of that footprint I am inclined to think that it must have been made by the foot of a derrick, and not by that of an Indian.

But it was on the other side of the Island, between the Deaf and Dumb Asylum and Tubby Hook, and between the Ridge and the River, that I most loved to ramble. Here was the slope of a woodland height running down to a broad low strip, whose westernmost boundary was the railroad embankment, beyond which lay the broad blue Hudson, with Fort Lee and the first upspringing of the Palisades, to be seen by glimpses through the tree-trunks. This was, I think, the prettiest piece of flower-spangled wildwood that I have ever seen. For centuries it had drained the richness of that long and lofty ridge. The life of lawns and gardens had gone into it; the dark wood-soil had been washed



from out the rocks on the brow of the hill; and down below there, where a vagrom brooklet chirped its way be-

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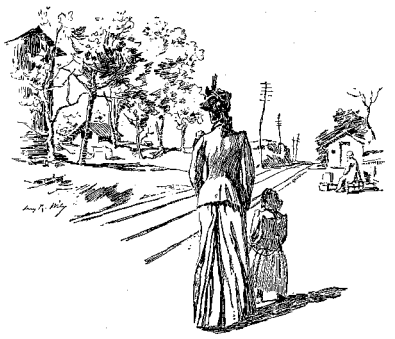
tween green stones, the wholesome soil bloomed forth in grateful luxuriance. From the first coming of the anemone



and the hepatica, to the time of the asters, there was always something growing there to delight the scent or the sight; and most of all do I remember the huge clumps of Dutchman's-breeches—the purple and the waxy white as well as the honey-tipped scarlet.

There were little sunlit clearings here, and I well recall the day when, looking across one of these, I saw something that stood awkwardly and conspicuously out of the young wood-grass—a raw stake of pine wood, and beyond that, another stake, and another; and parallel with these another row, marking out two straight lines, until the bushes hid them. The surveyors had begun to lay out the line of the new Boulevard, on which you may now roll in your carriage to Inwood, through the wreck of the woods where I used to scramble over rock and tree-trunk, going toward Tubby Hook.

It was on the grayest of gray November days last year that I had the unhappy thought of revisiting this love of my youth. I followed familiar trails, guided by landmarks I could not forget — although they had somehow grown incredibly poor and mean and shabby, and had entirely lost a certain dignity that they had until then kept quite clearly in my remembrance. And behold, they were no longer landmarks except to me. A change had come over the face of this old playground of mine. It had forgotten the withered, modest grace of the time when it was middle-aged, and when I was a boy. It was checkered and gridironed with pavements and electric lights. The Elevated Railroad roared at its doors behind clouds of smoke and steam. Great, cheerless, hideously ornate flat buildings reared their zinc-tipped fronts toward the gray heaven, to show the highest aspirations of that demoralized suburb in the way of domestic architecture. To right, to left, every way I turned, I saw a cheap, tawdry, slipshod imitation of the real city—or perhaps I should say, of all that is ugliest and vulgarest, least desirable, and least calculated to endure, in the troubled face of city life. I was glad to get away; glad that the gray mist that rolled up from the Hudson River hid from my sight within its fleecy bosom some details of that vulgar and pitiful degradation. One place alone I found as I had hoped to find it. Ex-Mayor Tiemann's house was gone, his conservatory was a crumbling ruin; the house we decked for Lincoln's death was a filthy tenement with a tumble-down gallery where the old portico had stood, and I found very little on my upward pilgrimage that had not experienced some change—for the worse, as it seemed to me. The very

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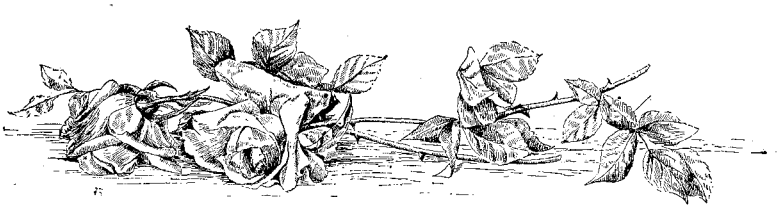
cemetery that belongs to old Trinity had dandified itself with a wonderful wall and a still more wonderful bridge to its annex—or appendix, or extension, or whatever you call it. But just above it is a little enclosure that is called a park—a place where a few people of modest, old-fashioned, domestic tastes had built their houses together to join in a common resistance against the encroachments of the speculator and the nomad house-hunter. I found this little settlement undisturbed, uninvaded, save by a sort of gentle decay that did it no ill-service, in my eyes. The pale dust was a little deeper in the roadways that had once been paved with limestone, a few more brown autumn leaves had fallen in the corners of the fences, the clustered wooden houses all looked a little more rustily respectable in their reserved and sleepy silence—a little bit more, I thought, as if they sheltered a colony of old maids. Otherwise it looked pretty much as it did when I first saw it, well nigh thirty years ago.

To see if there were anything alive in that misty, dusty, faded little abode of respectability, I rang at the door of one house, and found some inquiries to make concerning another one that seemed to be untenanted.

It was a very pretty young lady who opened the door for me, with such shining dark eyes and with so bright a red in her cheeks, that you felt she could not have been long in that dull, old-time spot, where life seemed to be all one neutral color. She answered my questions kindly, and then, with something in her manner which told me that strangers did not often wander in there, she said that it was a very nice place to live in. I told her that I knew it *had* been a very nice place to live in.



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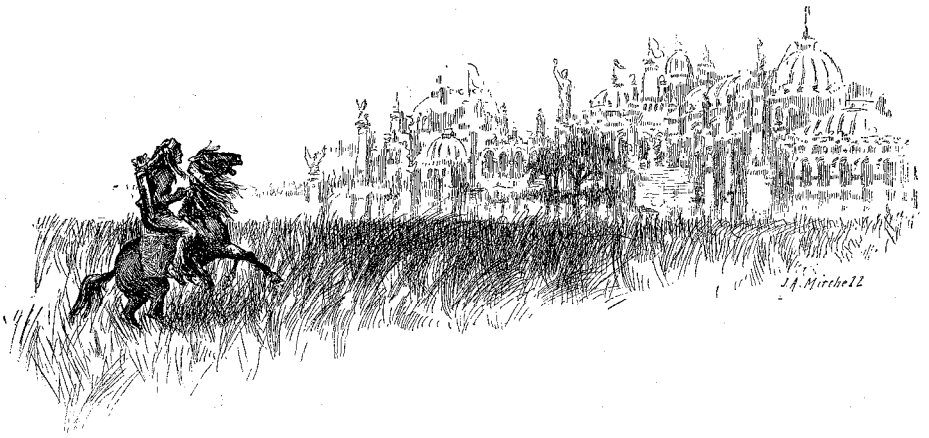

TYPES AND PEOPLE AT THE FAIR.

By J. A. Mitchell.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR AND CHARLES HOWARD JOHNSON.

IT is no reflection on the Columbian show to confess that perhaps the pleasantest moments are those spent in resting one's rebellious limbs upon a bench and in watching the crowd. It may be less novel and possibly less instructive than some other exhibits, but it is often more amusing. One realizes in studying this infinite stream of humanity how little he really knows, personally, of his own countrymen. New types seem to have sprung into existence for the sole purpose of appearing at this fair. It gives one a startling realization of the varying effects of climate, food, and mode of life upon our brothers and sisters. Voice, manner, color, size, shape, and mental fittings are so widely different as to suggest varieties in race. But we are all Americans, and those from the interior are more American than the others.

If the native Indian were of a reflective turn of mind, all this might awaken unpleasant thoughts. Judging from outside appearance, however, he has no thoughts whatever. He stalks solemnly about the grounds with a face as impassive as his wooden counterparts on Sixth Avenue. And yet *he* is the American. He is the only one among us who had ancestors to be discovered. He is the aboriginal; the first occupant and owner; the only one here with an hereditary right to the country we are celebrating. Perhaps the native realizes this in his own stolid fashion. As he stalks about among the dazzling structures of the Fair, and tries, or more likely, does not try, to grasp the innumerable wonders of art and science that only annoy and confuse him, it may require a too exhausting mental effort to recall the fact that his own grandfather very likely pursued the bounding buffalo over the waste of prairie now covered by the city of Chicago. He, at least, if his education permitted it, could claim historic connection with the country when Columbus came so near discovering it; whereas our own connection with the discoverer is certainly remote, and sometimes suggests (with the fact that he from whom we have named the Fair never actually saw this particular country) that we are taking liberties with his name.

The unconquerable American desire to do things on a bigger scale than anybody else, which often results in our "biting off more than we can chew," has again run away with us. There are many illustrations of this gnawing hunger at the World's Fair. In fact the Fair itself, as a whole, comes painfully near being an illustration in point. A

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colossal enterprise too vast and complex to permit of its attaining a perfect finish in the time allowed, seems to give more joy to our occidental spirits than any possible perfection on a smaller scale. Crudity has little terror for us. The whole scheme is so vast and comprehensive, and the scale so hopelessly magnificent that the visitor finds he has neither the spirit, spine, nor legs to even partially take it in. In fact the farther he goes the more he realizes the futility of the undertaking. And the hapless enthusiast who proposes to see, even superficially, the more important exhibits, should be fitted with a wrought-iron spine, nerves of catgut, and one goes there with intent to thoroughly "do it" is laying up for himself anguish of mind and the complete annihilation of his muscular and nervous force. It is far too big for any question of conscience to be allowed to enter in. Its bigness is beyond description. No words or pictures can tell the story of its size. Experience alone can teach it. You must go there day after day, to return at night with tired eyes and aching limbs, and with the bitter and ever increasing knowledge that as an exhibition you can never grasp it. Where other exhibitions have been satisfied with a display of an hundred cubic feet of any special article, Chicago must have

Trying to Get the Better of the Native.

more summer. In all the departments, from the fine arts to canned tomatoes, there is more than enough in numbers and in area to wear out the energy and paralyze the brain. To visit the Fair with profit or comfort you must leave your sense of duty behind. Whoever at least an acre. Of whatever the world has seen before this time it now sees larger specimens and more of them. This means for the visitor more steps, more fatigue, more confusion, more time, and more money.

But there is a good side to all this, if

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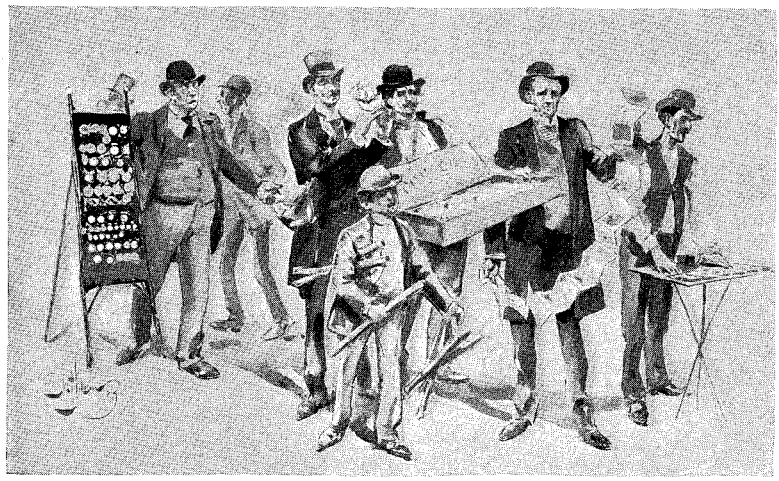
one can forget his physical fatigue. Few of us fully realize what the fair is doing for this country æsthetically. Not so much by its art collections, for the average American sees, or can see, enough good paintings in the course of a year to bring up his standard to a respectable level if he so elects, but by the architecture of the buildings themselves. Unless the aforementioned "Average American" is an undeserving barbarian who has made up his mind to prefer the wrong thing, these impressive monuments cannot fail to do him good. The honest beauty of their design ought to stamp itself with sufficient force upon his dawning reason to make him see the crudity of the United States architecture in which he has wallowed up to date. No praise is too high for what Chicago has achieved in this direction. There are, of course, at the Fair some painful examples of what the untamed American architect loves to do, but he is fortunately in the minority. And the very contrast he offers works for progress in the cause of good art and a higher standard. The United States Building, designed by a Government architect, is a melancholy warning.

The more intimate one becomes with this particular fair, the more forcibly he realizes the fact that we are, above all else, a practical people. After being duly impressed by the gigantic proportions and artistic excellence of the buildings, for which no praise is too high, we come gradually to learn, as we meander among the exhibits, that those things which excite our surprise and curiosity are generally the results of ingenuity and manual skill. In those departments, for instance, relating to art, literature, and history, there is little to startle the traveller who is at all familiar with previous international shows. The best in the art galleries is, as usual, from Europe. There is no dodging the fact that the average American is not overladen with the artistic sense. His enthusiasm runs in other directions. When it comes to the outward manifestations of human ingenuity, he is "on deck;" he is "in it" and "with you." The application of electricity to filling teeth, or converting sawdust into table butter, kindles in his bosom an excitement he never experienced in the art department. It certainly seems, after a visit to the electricity and machinery, that human hands can do nothing that is not more quickly accomplished by some machine. Not only this, but time and distance count for nothing, and, if we keep on as we have started, the day will soon be here when the man in Maine can shake hands with his friend in Arizona. Already the sun is a hard-working slave. Light, air, water, and in fact all nature seems cruelly overworked.



Fakirs.

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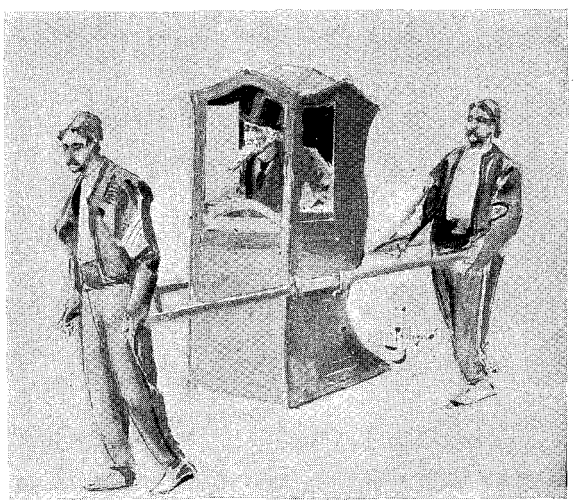
If she ever strikes, it will be an awkward period for us. These mechanical and scientific surprises make it interesting to speculate as to possible sights at our next grand exhibition, say twenty years hence. The man in China, for instance, need not go to the future fair at all. He will probably be able to see and hear it all at home. If he does go he can return to Shanghai for his lunch.

But the American as seen at this fair, although first of all practical, is not, from another point of view, so far behind in his artistic sense as we are in the habit of considering him. In the first place, he is found, as a rule, standing before the best paintings and passing by the poorer ones. Those galleries containing the finest works are invariably the most crowded. And this is the greatest compliment we can pay ourselves. If, on the other hand, enthusiastic groups collected about the impressionists, and took pleasure in the purple and yellow "effects," that are sprinkled about the French and American sections there would be cause for anxiety. But such is not the case. That the impressionists still count their warmest admirers among themselves, their wives, sisters, and aunts, is a hopeful sign. As a people, we take many things less seriously than some of our contemporaries, but in matters of art we like it with a purpose. Too little clothing still strikes us as frivolous and improper. Blood, violence, and all unpleasantness are sometimes historically instructive, but, as a rule, we are fond of comfortable subjects. We still like a taste of sugar in our art.



The East and the West.

But the brightest sign of all is the universal and hearty appreciation by the multitude of the buildings themselves. The expressions of delight by those who see for the first time these marvels of architectural beauty, indicate at least a capacity for artistic enjoyment. In fact the American who steps for the first time upon the borders of the Grand Basin, and looks upon the scene before him without a tingle of pride and pleasure is not of the stuff he should be. No words can give a just idea of the magnificence and restful beauty of this gigantic achievement. Rome and Greece were of marble and built for a more serious purpose. This is a city for a single summer. As such it is a complete and glorious triumph.

There is nothing like a colossal exhibition to emphasize the disastrous effects of wealth upon the human spirit. Your friend with plenty of money goes to the Fair because others do and because he hates to be "out of it." He reaches Chicago in a palace car, occupies luxurious rooms at a comfortable and expensive hotel, takes a carriage when others walk, and at the exhibition itself derives pleasure only from those things that are unexpectedly novel. And to him such sights are few and such sensations rare. What he does realize, however, continually and with force, is the enormity of the crowd with its thoughtless persistence in holding the best places in front of those exhibits he wishes to see himself. Moreover, there is an ever-increasing sense of physical discomfort, and that is something your moneyed friend is slow to

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forgive. But he does his duty, and he is glad above all to get home again.

But how different with your less prosperous friend, who has been economizing for months in order to get there! It being an expensive business, his time is

A Bride and Groom.

limited, and he drinks it in through all his senses, excitedly and with large gulps. It is hard work, but how interesting! That dull pain which overtakes the great majority of sightseers soon catches him in the back of his neck, but as long as he can see, hear, and walk, he profits by his opportunities. And he goes to his home mentally refreshed, a broader and a wiser man. He has gained an experience he would not exchange for many dollars.

An unlooked-for feature of the exhibition is the profusion of newly married couples. Whether all this individual ecstasy adds gayety or mournfulness to the Fair depends, of course, entirely upon the point of view from which the victims are regarded. It is evident that many happy grooms have considered this a chance to kill two birds with one stone, and, as far as one can judge results from outward appearances, there is no question as to the practical working of the scheme. The happy couple find themselves in a sort of fairy land, wandering about among countless strangers, whose very numbers seem to lend security and to harden the over-sensitive soul. The crowd also seems to create a feeling of isolation which the innermost recesses of a

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virgin forest could never supply. Moreover, there is here so much else to occupy the attention of the usually obnoxious public that the bride and groom can hold hands with absolute security and be as bold or blushing as their temperaments may demand.

The rolling-chairs that run about the grounds and through the buildings are the salvation of many a fainting spirit. To thousands of human beings with nothing but a human back and human legs the fair would be a failure without them. They are support for the weary, strength for the weak, and hope and a new life for the despairing. The guides who navigate them are, as a rule, college students, profiting by this opportunity to see the fair and to secure additional dollars toward completing their studies. The result is, for the occupant of the chair, an intelligent and agreeable companion, who is ready and willing to give any information he may possess. And besides, they are neither sharks nor liars, but fair and honorable respecters of truth. There is sometimes a contrast in manners and education between the occupant of the chair and the man behind that is not in favor of the former. When one sees what is evidently a citizen with far more money than brains, and without the faintest appreciation of the beauties that encompass him, wheeled about at seventy-five cents an hour by a youth so far his superior that any comparison is impossible, it causes one to realize that Fortune is indeed an irresponsible flirt, who is never so happy as when doing the wrong thing.

A not uncommon sight, and one of the countless illustrations of what an excellent husband the American becomes when properly trained, is that of the weary, uninterested man, lingering patiently among laces, china, and views of Switzerland. His heart all the while is off with the machinery, possibly with that more than human little machine that winds the cotton on the spools. Such cases are, of course, offset by the devoted women who wear themselves out in tramping through soulless acres of agricultural products, locomotives, wagons, models of ships, and all the other follies that appeal to man.

The burning question of the hour for the visitor from another city is the question of finance. He who is worth his million and intends spending a fortnight in Chicago, will do well to take his million with him. He may bring some of it away, but that will depend entirely upon his own capacity for economy. Before registering at the hotel let him be sure to secure his return ticket, for it is a long walk from Chi-

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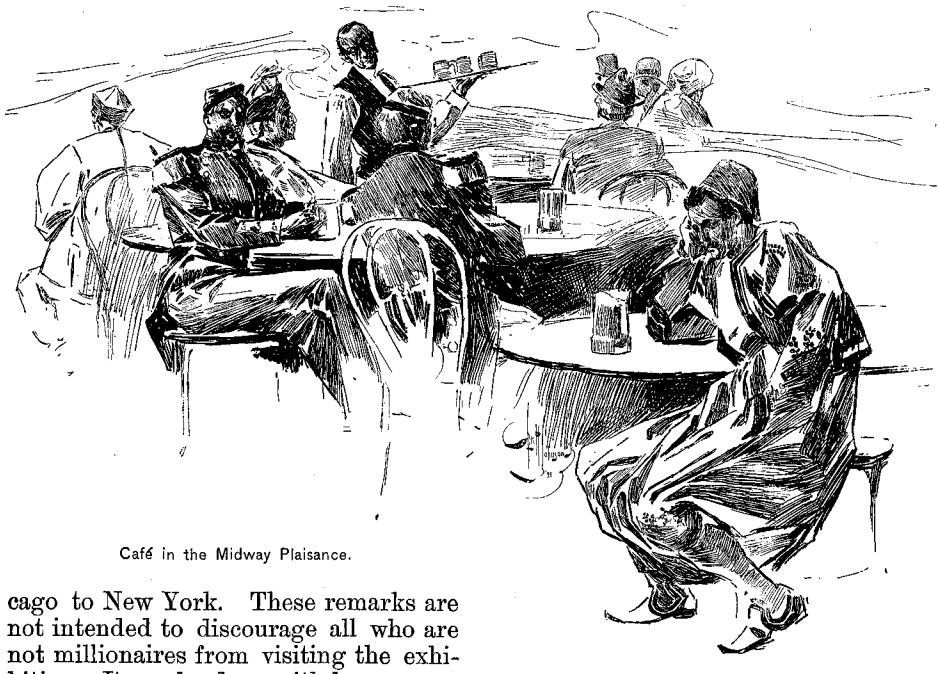

Café in the Midway Plaisance.

cago to New York. These remarks are not intended to discourage all who are not millionaires from visiting the exhibition. It can be done with less money. The writer has himself accomplished it. In fact, it is only fair to say that many of the stories of extortion which have come from the White City are much exaggerated. The most successful brigands are in the city of Chicago, and not at the Fair.

The writer can testify, from his own personal experience, that a very good lunch can be procured in the State of Illinois for less than one hundred dollars. Thirty dollars is more than enough for a sandwich, and a glass of water can be purchased anywhere for less than ninety cents. While to walk by the *cafés* and restaurants and look upon others who are eating, costs the promenader nothing whatever. But these moderate prices do not obtain at your hotel. The object of keeping a hotel is, like some other occupations, partly to make money. The Chicago hotel-keeper does not ignore this fact. His ideas of the relation of profit to expenditure are well calculated to startle the guest of reasonable expectations. If the guest is not overweeningly ambitious and is satisfied to sleep in a closet or hang from the stairs his expenses need be no greater than if he occupied a handsome suite of rooms at any first-class New York hotel. But if he insists on having a real chamber, larger even than his own bath-room at home, and with a real window in it, then he must pay. And it is then that he begins to discover why his landlord keeps a hotel. Any previous extravagances in the way of horses, real estate, or precious stones are as nothing to the present outlay. He finds that the rate per diem is, as far as he can judge, based upon the supposition that the hotel is to be closed to-morrow and must be paid for to-day. And real estate is high, even in Chicago. In matters of nourishment, the wealth of Ormus is of no avail, unless the waiter receives a tip exceeding in value the handsomest Christmas present ever given to a dearest friend.

Within the grounds there is little extortion, thanks to the firmness of the ruling powers.

But let not the Chicagoan whose eye may fall upon these lines suppose for an instant that they are intended as reflections on his character. The city that secured the prize is simply fulfilling its inevitable destiny. Had New York drawn the plum we should have witnessed a worse extortion with the added mortification of a much inferior ex-

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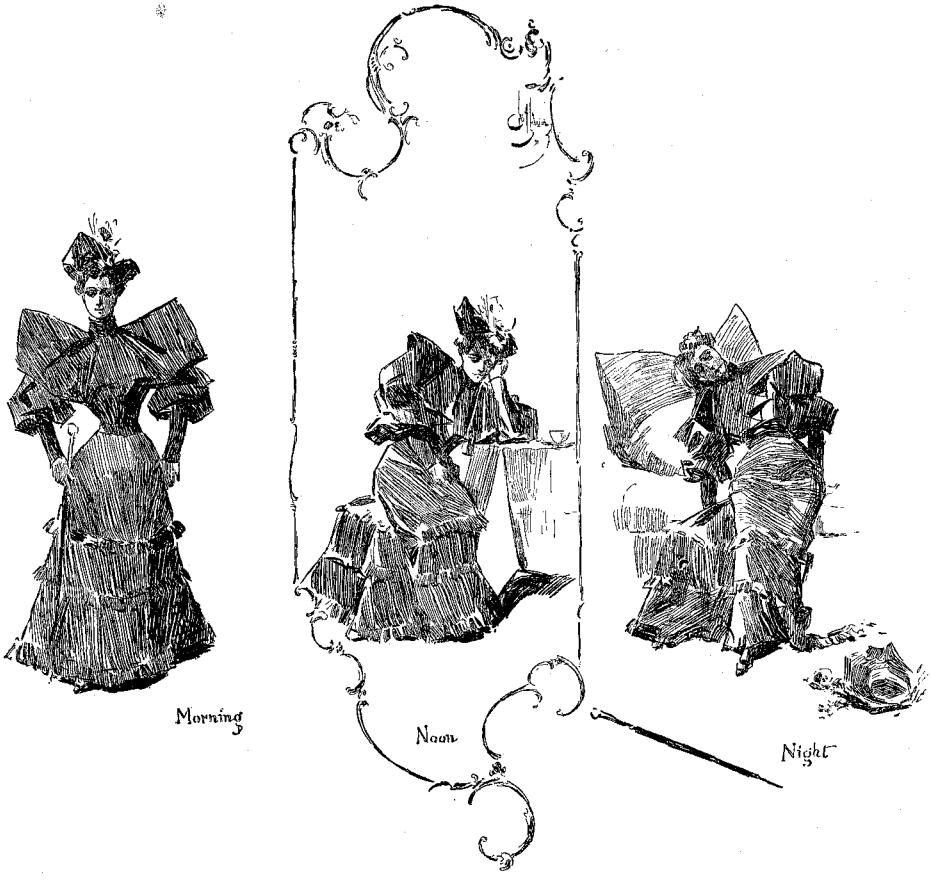
hibition. Moreover, there is no public spirit in New York, and there is a great deal of it in Chicago. This sentiment alone is more than enough to make the difference between success and failure. The woods are full of citizens willing to begin at sunrise and discourse to you until midnight of the wonders of Chicago. In ordinary times this burning desire to impart just that kind of information is not always appreciated by the outside world; but in times of fairs the spirit that prompts it becomes a mighty engine. It was soon demonstrated that these citizens could work as well as talk, and as a result the White City has risen as from a fairy's wand.

The important question for the individual citizen is whether it is worth his while to go to this fair. And this of course depends altogether upon his purse, his stomach, his back, his legs, nerves, wife, children, and business. He may never have another such opportunity for mental expansion and physical discomfort. It is a marvel of architectural beauty. It is days of instruction, of fatigue, of art and science, of surprise and exasperation, of mental development, fatigue, and financial ruin. In the end his personal preferences, however, will probably have little to do with it. All the world are going and he must go too.



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THE COPPERHEAD.

By Harold Frederic.

III.

ONCE, in the duck-season, as I lay hidden among the marsh-reeds with an older boy, a crow passed over us, flying low. Looking up at him, I realized for the first time how beautiful a creature was this common black thief of ours—how splendid his strength and the sheen of his coat, how proudly graceful the sweep and curves of his great slow wings. The boy beside me fired, and in a flash what I had been admiring changed—even as it stopped headlong in mid-air—into a hideous thing, an evil confusion of jumbled feathers. The awful swiftness of that transition from beauty and power to hateful carrion haunted me for a long time.

I half expected that Abner Beech would crumple up in some such distressing way, all of a sudden, when I told him that his son Jeff was in open rebellion, and intended to go off and enlist. It was incredible to the senses that any member of the household should set at defiance the patriarchal will of its head. But that the offence should come from placid, slow-witted, good-natured Jeff, and that it should involve the appearance of a Beech in a blue uniform—these things staggered the imagination. It was clear that something prodigious must happen.

As it turned out, nothing happened at all. The farmer and his wife sat out on the veranda, as was their wont of a summer evening, rarely exchanging a word, but getting a restful sort of satisfaction in together surveying their barns and haystacks and the yellow-brown stretch of fields beyond.

"Jeff says he's goin' to-night to Tecumseh, an' he's goin' to enlist, an' if you want him to run over to say good-by you're to let him know there."

I leant upon my newly-acquired fish-pole for support, as I unburdened myself of these sinister tidings. The old pair looked at me in calm-eyed silence, as if I had related the most trivial of village occurrences. Neither moved a muscle nor uttered a sound, but just gazed, till it felt as if their eyes were burning holes into me.

"That's what he said," I repeated, after a pause, to mitigate the embarrassment of that dumb steadfast stare.

The mother it was who spoke at last. "You'd better go round and get your supper," she said, quietly.

The table was spread, as usual, in the big, low-ceilinged room which during the winter was used as a kitchen. What was unusual was to discover a strange man seated alone in his shirt-sleeves at this table, eating his supper. As I took my chair, however, I saw that he was not altogether a stranger. I recognized in him the little old Irishman who had farmed Ezra Tracy's beaver-meadow the previous year on shares, and done badly, and had since been hiring out for odd jobs at hoeing and haying. He had lately lost his wife, I recalled now, and lived alone in a tumble-down old shanty beyond Parker's saw-mill. He had come to us in the spring, I remembered, when the brindled calf was born, to beg a pail of what he called "basteings," and I speculated in my mind whether it was this repellent mess that had killed his wife. Above all these thoughts rose the impression that Abner must have decided to do a heap of ditching and wall-building, to have hired a new hand in this otherwise slack season—and at this my back began to ache prophetically.

"How are yeh!" the new-comer remarked, affably, as I sat down and reached for the bread. "An' did yeh see the boys march away? An' had they a drum wid 'em?"

"What boys?" I asked, in blank ignorance as to what he was at.

"I'm told there's a baker's dozen of 'em gone, more or less," he replied,

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"Well, glory be to the Lord, 'tis an ill wind blows nobody good. Here am I aitin' butter on my bread, an' cheese on top o' that."

I should still have been in the dark, had not one of the hired girls, Janey Wilcox, come in from the butter-room, to ask me in turn much the same thing, and to add the explanation that a whole lot of the young men of the neighborhood had privately arranged among themselves to enlist together as soon as the harvesting was over, and had this day gone off in a body. Among them, I learned now, were our two hired men, Warner Pitts and Ray Watkins. This, then, accounted for the presence of the Irishman.

As a matter of fact, there had been no secrecy about the thing save with the contingent which our household furnished, and that was only because of the fear which Abner Beech inspired. His son and his servants alike preferred to hook it, rather than explain their patriotic impulses to him. But naturally enough, our farm-girls took it for granted that all the others had gone in the same surreptitious fashion, and this threw an air of fascinating mystery about the whole occurrence. They were deeply surprised that I should have been down past the Corners, and even beyond the cheese-factory, and seen nothing of these extraordinary martial preparations; and I myself was ashamed of it.

Opinions differed, I remember, as to the behavior of our two hired men. "Till" Babcock and the Underwood girl defended them, but Janey took the other side, not without various unpleasant personal insinuations, and the Irishman and I were outspoken in their condemnation. But nobody said a word about Jeff, though it was plain enough that everyone knew.

Dusk fell while we still talked of these astounding events—my thoughts meantime dividing themselves between efforts to realize these neighbors of ours as soldiers on the tented field, and uneasy speculation as to whether I should at last get a bed to myself or be expected to sleep with the Irishman.

Janey Wilcox had taken the lamp into the living-room. She returned now, with an uplifted hand and a face covered over with lines of surprise.

"You're to all of you come in," she whispered, impressively. "Abner's got the Bible down. We're goin' to have fam'ly prayers, or somethin'."

With one accord we looked at the Irishman. The question had never before arisen on our farm, but we all knew about other cases, in which Catholic hands held aloof from the household's devotions. There were even stories of their refusal to eat meat on some one day of the week, but this we hardly brought ourselves to credit. Our surprise at the fact that domestic religious observances were to be resumed under the Beech roof-tree—where they had completely lapsed ever since the trouble at the church—was as nothing compared with our curiosity to see what the newcomer would do.

What he did was to get up and come along with the rest of us, quite as a matter of course. I felt sure that he could not have understood what was going on.

We filed into the living-room. The Beeches had come in and shut the veranda door, and "M'rye" was seated in her rocking-chair, in the darkness beyond the book-case. Her husband had the big book open before him on the table; the lamp-light threw the shadow of his long nose down into the gray of his beard with a strange effect of fierceness. His lips were tight-set and his shaggy brows drawn into a commanding frown, as he bent over the pages.

Abner did not look up till we had taken our seats. Then he raised his eyes toward the Irishman.

"I don't know, Hurley," he said, in a grave, deep-booming voice, "whether you feel it right for you to join us—we bein' Protestants——"

"Ah, it's all right, sir," replied Hurley, reassuringly, "I'll take no harm by it."

A minute's silence followed upon this magnanimous declaration. Then Abner, clearing his throat, began solemnly to read the story of Absalom's revolt. He had the knack, not uncommon in those primitive class-meeting days, of making his strong, low-pitched voice quaver and wail in the most tear-com-

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pelling fashion when he read from the Old Testament. You could hardly listen to him going through even the genealogical tables of Chronicles dry-eyed. His Jeremiah and Ezekiel were equal to the funeral of a well-beloved relation.

This night he read as I had never heard him read before. The whole grim story of the son's treason and final misadventure, of the ferocious battle in the wood of Ephraim, of Joab's savagery, and of the rival runners, made the air vibrate about us, and took possession of our minds and kneaded them like dough, as we sat in the mute circle in the old living-room. From my chair I could see Hurley without turning my head, and the spectacle of excitement he presented—bending forward with dropped jaw and wild, glistening gray eyes, a hand behind his ear to miss no syllable of this strange new tale—only added to the effect it produced on me.

Then there came the terrible picture of the King's despair. I had trembled as we neared this part, foreseeing what heart-wringing anguish Abner, in his present mood, would give to that cry of the stricken father—"O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" To my great surprise, he made very little of it. The words came coldly, almost contemptuously, so that the listener could not but feel that David's lamentations were out of place, and might better have been left unuttered.

But now the farmer, leaping over into the next chapter, brought swart, stalwart, blood-stained Joab on the scene before us, and in an instant we saw why the King's outburst of mourning had fallen so flat upon our ears. Abner Beech's voice rose and filled the room with its passionate fervor as he read out Joab's speech—wherein the King is roundly told that his son was a worthless fellow, and was killed not a bit too soon, and that for the father to thus publicly lament him is to put to shame all his household and his loyal friends and servants.

While these sonorous words of protest against paternal weakness still rang in the air, Abner abruptly closed the book with a snap. We looked at him and at one another for a bewildered moment, and then "Till" Babcock stooped as if to kneel by her chair, but Janey nudged her, and we all rose and made our way silently out again into the kitchen. It had been apparent enough that no spirit of prayer abode in the farmer's breast.

"'Twas a fine bold sinsible man, that Job!" remarked Hurley to me, when the door was closed behind us, and the women had gone off to talk the scene over among themselves in the butter-room. "Would it be him that had thim lean turkeys?"

With some difficulty I made out his meaning. "Oh, no!" I explained, "the man Abner read about was Jo-ab, not Job. They were quite different people."

"I thought as much," replied the Irishman. "'Twould not be in so grand a man's nature to let his fowls go hungry. And do we be hearing such tales every night?"

"Maybe Abner 'll keep on, now he's started again," I said. "We ain't had any Bible-reading before since he had his row down at the church, and we left off going."

Hurley displayed such a lively interest in this matter that I went over it pretty fully, setting forth Abner's position and the intolerable provocations which had been forced upon him. It took him a long time to grasp the idea that in Protestant gatherings not only the pastor spoke, but the class-leaders and all others who were conscious of a call might have their word as well, and that in this way even the lowliest and meanest of the farmer's neighbors had been able to affront him in the church itself.

"Too many cooks spoil the broth," was his comment upon this. "'Tis far better to hearken to one man only. If he's right, you're right. If he's wrong, why, thin, there ye have him in front of ye for protection."

Bed-time came soon after, and Mrs. Beech appeared in her nightly round of the house to see that the doors were all fastened. The candle she bore threw up a flaring yellow light upon her chin, but made the face above it by contrast still darker and more saturnine. She moved about in erect impassiveness, trying the bolts and the window catches,

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and went away again, having said never a word. I had planned to ask her if I might now have a bed to myself, but somehow my courage failed me, so stern and majestic was her aspect.

I took the desired boon without asking, and dreamed of her as a darkling and relentless Joab in petticoats, slaying her own son Jeff as he hung by his hay-colored hair in one of the apple-trees of our orchard.

IV.

On all the other farms roundabout, this mid-August was a slack season. The hired men and boys did a little early fruit-picking, a little berrying, a little stone-drawing, but for the most part they could be seen idling about the woods or along the river down below Juno Mills, with gun or fish-pole. Only upon the one farm whose turn it was that week to be visited by the itinerant threshing-machine, was any special activity visible.

It was well known, however, that we were not to get the threshing machine at all. How it was managed, I never understood. Perhaps the other farmers combined in some way to over-awe or persuade the owners of the machine into refusing it to Abner Beech. More likely he scented the chance of a refusal and was too proud to put himself in its way by asking. At all events, we three —Abner, Hurley, and I—had to manage the threshing ourselves, on the matched wood floor of the carriage barn. All the fishing I did that year was in the prolific but unsubstantial waters of dreamland.

I did not work much, it is true, with the flail, but I lived all day in an atmosphere choked with dust and chaff, my ears deafened with the ceaseless whack! whack! of the hard wood clubs, bringing on fresh shocks of grain, and acting as general helper.

By toiling late and early we got this task out of the way just when the corn was ready to cut. This great job taxed all the energies of the two men, the one cutting, the other stacking, as they went. My own share of the labor was to dig the potatoes and pick the eating-apples —a quite portentous enough undertaking for a lad of twelve. All this kept me very much to myself. There was no chance to talk during the day, and at night I was glad to drag my tired limbs off to bed before the girls had fairly cleared the supper things away. A weekly newspaper—*The World*—came regularly to the post-office at the Corners for us, but we were so over-worked that often it lay there for weeks at a time, and even when someone went after it, nobody but Abner cared to read it.

So far as I know, no word ever came from Jeff. His name was never mentioned among us.

It was now past the middle of September. Except for the fall ploughing on fields that were to be put to grass under the grain in the spring—which would come much later—the getting in of the root crops, and the husking, our season's labors were pretty well behind us. The women folk had toiled like slaves as well, taking almost all the chores about the cattle-barns off our shoulders, and carrying on the butter-making without bothering us. Now that a good many cows were drying up, it was their turn to take things easy, too. But the girls, instead of being glad at this, began to borrow unhappiness over the certainty that there would be no husking-bees on the Beech farm.

One heard no other subject discussed now, as we sat of a night in the kitchen. Even when we foregathered in the living-room instead, the Babcock and the Underwood girl talked in ostentatiously low tones of the hardship of missing such opportunities for getting beaux, and having fun. They recalled to each other, with tones of longing, this and that husking-bee of other years—now one held of a moonlight night in the field itself, where the young men pulled the stacks down and dragged them to where the girls sat in a ring on big pumpkins, and merriment, songs, and chorused laughter chased the happy hours along; now of a bee held in the late wintry weather, where the men went off to the barn by themselves and husked till they were tired, and then with warning whoops came back to where the girls were waiting for them in the warm, hospitable farm-house, and

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the frolic began, with cider and apples and pumpkin-pies, and old Lem Hornbeck's fiddle to lead the dancing.

Alas! they shook their empty heads and mourned, there would be no more of these delightful times! Nothing definite was ever said as to the reason for our ostracism from the sports and social enjoyments of the season. There was no need for that. We all knew too well that it was Abner Beech's politics which made us outcasts, but even these two complaining girls did not venture to say so in his hearing. Their talk, however, grew at last so persistently querulous that "M'rye" bluntly told them one night to "shut up about husking bees," following them out into the kitchen for that purpose, and speaking with unaccustomed acerbity. Thereafter we heard no more of their grumbling, but in a week or two "Till" Babcock left for her home over on the Dutch Road, and began circulating the report that we prayed every night for the success of Jeff Davis.

It was on a day in the latter half of September, perhaps the 20th or 21st—as nearly as I am able to make out from the records now—that Hurley and I started off with a double team and our big box-wagon, just after breakfast, on a long day's journey. We were taking a heavy load of potatoes in to market at Octavius, twelve miles distant; thence we were to drive out an additional three miles to a cooper-shop and bring back as many butter-firkins as we could stack up behind us, not to mention a lot of groceries of which "M'rye" gave me a list.

It was a warm, sweet aired, hazy autumn day, with a dusky red sun sauntering idly about in the sky, too indolent to cast more than the dimmest and most casual suggestion of a shadow for anything or anybody. The Irishman sat round-backed and contented on the very high seat overhanging the horses, his elbows on his knees, and a little black pipe turned upside down in his mouth. He would suck satisfiedly at this for hours after the fire had gone out, until, my patience exhausted, I begged him to light it again. He seemed almost never to put any new tobacco into this pipe, and to this day it remains a twin-mystery to me why its contents neither burned themselves to nothing nor fell out.

We talked a good deal, in a desultory fashion, as the team plodded their slow way into Octavius. Hurley told me, in answer to the questions of a curious boy, many interesting and remarkable things about the old country, as he always called it, and more particularly about his native part of it, which was on the sea-shore within sight of Skibbereen. He professed always to be filled with longing to go back, but at the same time guarded his tiny personal expenditure with the greatest solicitude, in order to save money to help one of his relations to get away. Once, when I taxed him with this inconsistency, he explained that life in Ireland was the most delicious thing on earth, but you had to get off at a distance of some thousands of miles to really appreciate it.

Naturally there was considerable talk between us, as well, about Abner Beech and his troubles. I don't know where I could have heard it, but when Hurley first came to us I at once took it for granted that the fact of his nationality made him a sympathizer with the views of our household. Perhaps I only jumped at this conclusion from the general ground that the few Irish who in those days found their way into the farm-country were held rather at arms-length by the community, and must in the nature of things feel drawn to other outcasts. At all events, I made no mistake. Hurley could not have well been more vehemently embittered against abolitionism and the war than Abner was, but he expressed his feelings with much greater vivacity and fluency of speech. It was surprising to see how much he knew about the politics and political institutions of a strange country, and how excited he grew about them when anyone would listen to him. But as he was a small man, getting on in years, he did not dare air these views down at the Corners. The result was that he and Abner were driven to commune together, and mutually inflamed each other's passionate prejudices—which was not at all needful.

When at last, shortly before noon, we

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drove into Octavius, I jumped off to fill one portion of the grocery errands, leaving Hurley to drive on with the potatoes. We were to meet at the little village tavern for dinner.

He was feeding the horses in the hotel shed when I rejoined him an hour or so later. I came in, bursting with the importance of the news I had picked up—scattered, incomplete, and even incoherent news, but of a most exciting sort. The awful battle of Antietam had happened two or three days before, and nobody in all Octavius was talking or thinking of anything else. Both the Dearborn County regiments had been in the thick of the fight, and I could see from afar, as I stood on the outskirts of the throng in front of the post-office, some long strips of paper posted up beside the door, which men said contained a list of our local dead and wounded. It was hopeless, however, to attempt to get anywhere near this list, and nobody whom I questioned, knew anything about the names of those young men who had marched away from our Four Corners. Someone did call out, though, that the telegraph had broken down, or gone wrong, and that not half the news had come in as yet. But they were all so deeply stirred up, so fiercely pushing and hauling to get toward the door, that I could learn little else.

This was what I began to tell Hurley, with eager volubility, as soon as I got in under the shed. He went on with his back to me, impassively measuring out the oats from the bag, and clearing aside the stale hay in the manger, the impatient horses rubbing at his shoulders with their noses the while. Then, as I was nearly done, he turned and came out to me, slapping the fodder-mess off his hands.

He had a big, fresh cut running transversely across his nose and cheek, and there were stains of blood in the gray stubble of beard on his chin. I saw too that his clothes looked as if he had been rolled on the dusty road outside.

"Sure, then, I'm after hearin' the news myself," was all he said.

He drew out from beneath the wagon seat a bag of crackers and a hunk of cheese, and, seating himself on an overturned barrel, began to eat. By a gesture I was invited to share this meal, and did so, sitting beside him. Something had happened, apparently, to prevent our having dinner in the tavern.

I fairly yearned to ask him what this something was, and what was the matter with his face, but it did not seem quite the right thing to do, and presently he began mumbling, as much to himself as to me, a long and broken discourse, from which I picked out that he had mingled with a group of lusty young farmers in the market-place, asking for the latest intelligence, and that while they were conversing in a wholly amiable manner, one of them had suddenly knocked him down and kicked him, and that thereafter they had pursued him with curses and loud threats half-way to the tavern. This and much more he proclaimed between mouthfuls, speaking with great rapidity and in so much more marked a brogue than usual, that I understood only a fraction of what he said.

He professed entire innocence of offence in the affair, and either could not or would not tell what it was he had said to invite the blow. I dare say he did in truth richly provoke the violence he encountered, but at the time I regarded him as a martyr, and swelled with indignation every time I looked at his nose.

I remained angry, indeed, long after he himself had altogether recovered his equanimity and whimsical good spirits. He waited outside on the seat while I went in to pay for the baiting of the horses, and it was as well that he did, I fancy, because there were half a dozen brawny farm-hands and villagers standing about the bar, who were laughing in a stormy way over the episode of the "Copperhead Paddy" in the market.

We drove away, however, without incident of any sort—sagaciously turning off the main street before we reached the post-office block, where the congregated crowd seemed larger than ever. There seemed to be some fresh tidings, for several scattering outbursts of cheering reached our ears after we could no longer see the throng; but, so far from stopping to inquire what it was, Hurley put whip to the horses, and we rattled

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smartly along out of the excited village into the tranquil, scythe-shorn country.

The cooper to whom we now went for our butter-firkins was a long-nosed, lean, and taciturn man, whom I think of always as with his apron tucked up at the corner, and his spectacles on his forehead, close under the edge of his square brown-paper cap. He had had word that we were coming, and the firkins were ready for us. He helped us load them in dead silence, and with a gloomy air.

Hurley desired the sound of his own voice. "Well, then, sir," he said, as our task neared completion, "'tis worth coming out of our way these fifteen miles to lay eyes on such fine, grand firkins as these same—such an elegant shape on 'em, an' put together wid such nateness!"

"You could git 'em just as good at Hagadorn's," said the cooper, curtly, "within a mile of your place."

"Huh!" cried Hurley, with contempt, "Haggydorn is it? Faith, we'll not touch him or his firkins ayether! Why, man, they're not fit to mention the same day wid yours. Ah, just look at the darlins, will ye, that nate an' clane a Christian could ate from 'em!"

The cooper was blarney-proof. "Hagadorn's are every smitch as good!" he repeated, ungraciously.

The Irishman looked at him perplexedly, then shook his head as if the problem were too much for him, and slowly clambered up to the seat. He had gathered up the lines, and we were ready to start, before any suitable words came to his tongue.

"Well, then, sir," he said, "anything to be agreeable. If I hear a man speaking a good word for your firkins, I'll dispute him."

"The firkins are well enough," growled the cooper at us, "an' they're made to sell, but I ain't so almighty tickled about takin' Copperhead money for 'em that I want to clap my wings an' crow over it."

He turned scornfully on his heel at this, and we drove away. The new revelation of our friendlessness depressed me, but Hurley did not seem to mind it at all. After a philosophic comparative remark about the manners of pigs run wild in a bog, he dismissed the affair from his thoughts altogether, and hummed cheerful words to melancholy tunes half the way home, what time he was not talking to the horses or tossing stray conversational fragments at me.

My own mind soon enough surrendered itself to harrowing speculations about the battle we had heard of. The war had been going on now, for over a year, but most of the fighting had been away off in Missouri and Tennessee, or on the lower Mississippi, and the reports had not possessed for me any keen direct interest. The idea of men from our own district—young men whom I had seen, perhaps fooled with, in the hayfield only ten weeks before—being in an actual storm of shot and shell, produced a faintness at the pit of my stomach. Both Dearborn County regiments were in it, the crowd said. Then of course our men must have been there—our hired men, and the Phillips boys, and Byron Truax, and his cousin Alonzo, and our Jeff! And if so many others had been killed, why not they as well?

"Antietam" still has a power to arrest my eyes on the printed page, and disturb my ears in the hearing, possessed by no other battle name. It seems now as if the very word itself had a terrible meaning of its own to me, when I first heard it that September afternoon—as if I recognized it to be the label of some awful novelty, before I knew anything else. It had its fascination for Hurley, too, for presently I heard him crooning to himself, to one of his queer old Irish tunes, some doggerel lines which he had made up to rhyme with it—three lines with "cheat 'em," "beat 'em," and "Antietam," and then his pet refrain, "Says the Shan van Vocht."

This levity jarred unpleasantly upon the mood into which I had worked myself, and I turned to speak of it, but the sight of his bruised nose and cheek restrained me. He had suffered too much for the faith that was in him to be lightly questioned now. So I returned to my grisly thoughts, which now all at once resolved themselves into a conviction that Jeff had been killed outright. My fancy darted to meet this notion, and straightway pictured for me a fantastic battle-field by moonlight, such as

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was depicted in Lossing's books, with overturned cannon-wheels and dead horses in the foreground, and in the centre, conspicuous above all else, the inanimate form of Jeff Beech, with its face coldly radiant in the moonshine.

"I guess I'll hop off and walk a spell," I said, under the sudden impulse of this distressing visitation.

It was only when I was on the ground, trudging along by the side of the wagon, that I knew why I had got down. We were within a few rods of the Corners, where one road turned off to go to the post-office. "Perhaps it'd be a good idea for me to find out if they've heard anything more—I mean—anything about Jeff," I suggested. "I'll just look in and see, and then I can cut home cross lots."

The Irishman nodded and drove on.

I hung behind, at the Corners, till the wagon had begun the ascent of the hill, and the looming bulk of the firkins made it impossible that Hurley could see which way I went. Then, without hesitation, I turned instead down the other road which led to "Jee" Hagadorn's.

V.

Time was when I had known the Hagadorn house, from the outside at least, as well as any other in the whole township. But I had avoided that road so long now, that when I came up to the place it seemed quite strange to my eyes.

For one thing, the flower garden was much bigger than it had formerly been. To state it differently, Miss Esther's marigolds and columbines, hollyhocks and peonies, had been allowed to usurp a lot of space where sweet-corn, potatoes and other table-truck used to be raised. This not only greatly altered the aspect of the place, but it lowered my idea of the practical good-sense of its owners.

What was more striking still, was the general air of decrepitude and decay about the house itself. An eaves-trough had fallen down; half the cellar door was off its hinges, standing up against the wall; the chimney was ragged and broken at the top; the clap-boards had never been painted, and now were almost black with weather-stain and dry rot. It positively appeared to me as if the house was tipping sideways, over against the little cooper-shop adjoining it—but perhaps that was a trick of the waning evening light. I said to myself that if we were not prospering on the Beech farm, at least our foe "Jee" Hagadorn did not seem to be doing much better himself.

In truth, Hagadorn, had always been among the poorest members of our community, though this by no means involves what people in cities think of as poverty. He had a little place of nearly two acres, and then he had his coopering business; with the two he ought to have got on comfortably enough. But a certain contrariness in his nature seemed to be continually interfering with this.

This strain of conscientious perversity ran through all we knew of his life before he came to us, just as it dominated the remainder of his career. He had been a well-to-do man some ten years before, in a city in the western part of the State, with a big cooper-shop, and a lot of men under him, making the barrels for a large brewery. (It was in these days, I fancy, that Esther took on that urban polish which the younger Benaiah missed.) Then he got the notion in his head that it was wrong to make barrels for beer, and threw the whole thing up. He moved into our neighborhood with only money enough to buy the old Andrews place, and build a little shop.

It was a good opening for a cooper, and Hagadorn might have flourished if he had been able to mind his own business. The very first thing he did was to offend a number of our biggest butter-makers by taxing them with sinfulness in also raising hops, which went to make beer. For a long time they would buy no firkins of him. Then, too, he made an unpleasant impression at church. As has been said, our meeting-house was a union affair; that is to say, no one denomination being numerous enough to have an edifice of its own, all the farmers roundabout—Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and so on—joined in paying the expenses. The travelling preachers who came to us

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represented these great sects, with lots of minute shadings off into Hard-shell, Soft-shell, Freewill, and other subdivided mysteries which I never understood. Hagadorn had a denomination all to himself, as might have been expected from the man. What the name of it was I seem never to have heard; perhaps it had no name at all. People used to say, though, that he behaved like a Shouting Methodist.

This was another way of saying that he made a nuisance of himself in church. At prayer meetings, in the slack seasons of the year, he would pray so long, and with such tremendous shouting and fury of gestures, that he had regularly to be asked to stop, so that those who had taken the trouble to learn and practise new hymns might have a chance to be heard. And then he would out-sing all the others, not knowing the tune in the least, and cause added confusion by yelling out shrill "Amens!" between the bars. At one time quite a number of the leading people ceased attending church at all, on account of his conduct.

He added heavily to his theological unpopularity, too, by his action in another matter. There was a wealthy and important farmer living over on the west side of Agrippa Hill, who was a Universalist. The expenses of our union meeting-house were felt to be a good deal of a burden, and our elders, conferring together, decided that it would be a good thing to waive ordinary prejudices, and let the Universalists come in, and have their share of the preaching. It would be more neighborly, they felt, and they would get a subscription from the Agrippa Hill farmer. He assented to the project, and came over four or five Sundays with his family and hired help, listened unflinchingly to orthodox sermons full of sulphur and blue flames, and put money on the plate every time. Then a Universalist preacher occupied the pulpit one Sunday, and preached a highly inoffensive and noncommittal sermon, and "Jee" Hagadorn stood up in his pew and violently denounced him as an infidel, before he had descended the pulpit steps. This created a painful scandal. The Universalist farmer, of course, never darkened that church door again. Some of our young men went so far as to discuss the ducking of the obnoxious cooper in the duck-pond. But he himself was neither frightened nor ashamed.

At the beginning, too, I suppose that his taking up Abolitionism made him enemies. Dearborn County gave Franklin Pierce a big majority in '52, and the bulk of our farmers, I know, were in that majority. But I have already dwelt upon the way in which all this changed in the years just before the War. Naturally enough, Hagadorn's position also changed. The rejected stone became the head of the corner. The tiresome fanatic of the 'fifties was the inspired prophet of the 'sixties. People still shrank from giving him undue credit for their conversion, but they felt themselves swept along under his influence none the less.

But just as his unpopularity kept him poor in the old days, it seemed that now the reversed condition was making him still poorer. The truth was, he was too excited to pay any attention to his business. He went off to Octavius three or four days a week to hear the news, and when he remained at home, he spent much more time standing out in the road discussing politics and the conduct of the war with passers-by, than he did over his staves and hoops. No wonder his place was run down.

The house was dark and silent, but there was some sort of a light in the cooper-shop beyond. My hope had been to see Esther rather than her wild old father, but there was nothing for it but to go over to the shop. I pushed the loosely fitting door back on its leathern hinges, and stepped over the threshold. The resinous scent of newly cut wood, and the rustle of the shavings under my feet, had the effect, somehow, of filling me with timidity. It required an effort to not turn and go out again.

The darkened and crowded interior of the tiny work-place smelt as well, I noted now, of smoke. On the floor before me was crouched a shapeless figure—bending in front of the little furnace, made of a section of stove-pipe, which the cooper used to dry the insides of newly fashioned barrels. A fire in this—half-blaze, half-smudge—gave

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forth the light I had seen from without, and the smoke which was making my nostrils tingle. Then I had to sneeze, and the kneeling figure sprang on the instant from the floor.

It was Esther who stood before me, coughing a little from the smoke, and peering inquiringly at me. "Oh—is that you, Jimmy?" she asked, after a moment of puzzled inspection in the dark.

She went on, before I had time to speak, in a nervous, half-laughing way: "I've been trying to roast an ear of corn here, but it's the worst kind of a failure. I've watched 'Ni' do it a hundred times, but with me it always comes out half-scorched and half-smoked. I guess the corn is too old now, any way. At all events, its tougher than Pharaoh's heart."

She held out to me, in proof of her words, a blackened and unseemly roasting-ear. I took it, and turned it slowly over, looking at it with the grave scrutiny of an expert. Several torn and opened sections showed where she had been testing it with her teeth. In obedience to her "See if you don't think it's too old," I took a diffident bite, at a respectful distance from the marks of her experiments. It was the worst I had ever tasted.

"I came over to see if you'd heard anything—any news," I said, desiring to get away from the corn subject.

"You mean about Tom?" she asked, moving so that she might see me more plainly.

I had stupidly forgotten about that transformation of names. "Our Jeff, I mean," I made answer.

"His name is Thomas Jefferson. *We* call him Tom," she explained; "that other name is too horrid. Did—did his people tell you to come and ask *me?*"

I shook my head. "Oh no!" I replied with emphasis, implying by my tone, I dare say, that they would have had themselves cut up into sausage-meat first.

The girl walked past me to the door, and out to the road-side, looking down toward the bridge with a lingering, anxious gaze. Then she came back, slowly.

"No, we have no news!" she said, with an effort at calmness. "He wasn't an officer, that's why. All we know is that the brigade his regiment is in lost 141 killed, 560 wounded, and 38 missing. That's all!" She stood in the doorway, her hands clasped tight, pressed against her bosom. "*That's all!*" she repeated, with a choking voice.

Suddenly she started forward, almost ran across the few yards of floor, and, throwing herself down in the darkest corner, where only dimly one could see an old buffalo-robe spread over a heap of staves, began sobbing as if her heart must break.

Her dress had brushed over the stove-pipe, and scattered some of the embers beyond the sheet of tin it stood on. I stamped these out, and carried the other remnants of the fire out doors. Then I returned, and stood about in the smoky little shop, quite helplessly listening to the moans and convulsive sobs which rose from the obscure corner. A bit of a candle in a bottle stood on the shelf by the window. I lighted this, but it hardly seemed to improve the situation. I could see her now, as well as hear her—huddled face downward upon the skin, her whole form shaking with the violence of her grief. I had never been so unhappy before in my life.

At last—it may not have been very long, but it seemed hours—there rose the sound of voices outside on the road. A wagon had stopped, and some words were being exchanged. One of the voices grew louder—came nearer; the other died off, ceased altogether, and the wagon could be heard driving away. On the instant the door was pushed sharply open, and "Jee" Hagadorn stood on the threshold, surveying the interior of his cooper-shop with gleaming eyes.

He looked at me; he looked at his daughter lying in the corner; he looked at the charred mess on the floor—yet seemed to see nothing of what he looked at. His face glowed with a strange excitement—which in another man I should have set down to drink.

"Glory be to God! Praise to the Most High! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!" he called out, stretching forth his hands in a rapturous sort of gesture I remembered from class-meeting days.

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Esther had leaped to her feet with squirrel-like swiftness at the sound of his voice, and now stood before him, her hands nervously clutching at each other, her reddened, tear-stained face a-fire with eagerness.

"Has word come?—is he safe?—have you heard?" so her excited questions tumbled over one another, as she grasped "Jee's" sleeve and shook it in feverish impatience.

"The day has come! The year of Jubilee is here!" he cried, brushing her hand aside, and staring with a fixed, ecstatic, open-mouthed smile straight ahead of him. "The words of the Prophet are fulfilled!"

"But Tom!—*Tom!*" pleaded the girl, piteously. "The list has come? You know he is safe?"

"Tom! *Tom!*" old "Jee" repeated after her, but with an emphasis contemptuous, not solicitous. "Perish a hundred Toms—yea—ten thousand! for one such day as this! 'For the Scarlet Woman of Babylon is overthrown, and bound with chains and cast into the lake of fire. Therefore, in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God which judged her!'"

He declaimed these words in a shrill, high-pitched voice, his face upturned, and his eyes half-closed. Esther plucked despairingly at his sleeve once more. "But have you seen?—is *his* name?—you must have seen!" she moaned, incoherently.

"Jee" descended for the moment from his plane of exaltation. "I *didn't* see!" he said, almost peevishly. "Lincoln has signed a proclamation freeing all the slaves! What do you suppose I care for your Toms and Dicks and Harrys, on such a day as this? 'Woe! woe! the great city Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour is thy judgment come!'"

The girl tottered back to her corner, and threw herself limply down upon the buffalo-robe again, hiding her face in her hands.

I pushed my way past the cooper, and trudged cross-lots home in the dark, tired, disturbed, and very hungry, but thinking most of all that if I had been worth my salt, I would have hit "Jee" Hagadorn with the adze that stood up against the door-still.

(To be continued.)

HER DYING WORDS.

By Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

IT was the good ship Agamenticus, five days out from New York, and bound for Liverpool. There was never a ship in a more pitiful plight.

On the Tuesday morning when she left Sandy Hook behind her, the sea had been nearly as smooth as an inland pond, and the sky one unbroken blue. What wind there was came in fitful puffs, and the captain began to be afraid that it would leave them altogether. Toward sunset, however, the breeze freshened smartly, and the vessel made a phenomenal run. On the following noon there was a falling barometer, the weather thickened, the sun went down in a purple blur, and by midnight the wind was blowing a gale. The next day the Agamenticus found herself rolling and plunging in the midst of one of those summer tempests which frequently can give points to their wintry accomplices. Captain Saltus, who had sailed the ocean for forty years, man and boy, had never experienced anything like that Thursday night, unless it was that Friday night, when nothing but a series of miracles saved the ship from foundering.

On Saturday morning the storm was over. The sun was breaking gorgeously though a narrow bank of fog that stretched from east to west, and the sea was calming itself, sullenly and reluctantly, with occasional moans and

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spasms. The storm was over, but it had given the Agamenticus her death-blow. The dripping decks were cluttered with rope-ends, split blocks, broken stanchions, and pine splinters—the débris of the foremast, of which only some ten or twenty feet remained. Such canvas as had not been securely furled hung in shreds from the main and mizzen yards, and at every lurch of the ship the flying cordage aloft lashed the masts. Two life-boats, with the bottoms stove in, swung loosely from the davits on the port side; the starboard boats were gone. The same sea that had wrenched them from their fastenings had also swept away John Sharon, the first mate. But the climax of all these disasters was a dreadful leak, the exact location of which was hidden by the cargo.

Such was the plight of the good ship Agamenticus at sunrise, on that fifth day out from New York.

The Agamenticus was a merchantman of about twelve hundred tons, and had excellent cabin accommodations, though she had been designed especially for freight. On this voyage, however, there happened to be five passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Livingston Tredick, Louise, their daughter, Dr. Newton Downs, and Miss Tredick's maid. The vessel belonged to a line running between Boston and New Orleans, and had been chartered by Mr. Tredick for the present occasion.

Mr. Tredick was a wealthy retired merchant who was intending to pass the summer at the German baths with his wife and daughter, and had followed the advice of his family physican in selecting a sailing-vessel instead of a steamer, in order that Mrs. Tredick, somewhat of an invalid, might get the benefit of a protracted sea-voyage. Louise, the daughter, was a very beautiful girl of nineteen or twenty; and Dr. Downs was a young physician of great promise and few patients, who had willingly consented to be Mr. Tredick's guest as far as Liverpool. The air in which Miss Louise Tredick moved had been for two years or more the only air that this young scientist could breathe without difficulty.

The relations existing between these two persons were of a rather unusual nature, and require a word or so of explanation.

At the time of his father's death, which occurred in 1879, Newton Downs was in his senior year at Bowdoin. The father had been a lawyer with an extensive practice and extravagant tastes, and his large annual income, easily acquired, had always been as easily disposed of. He was still in his prime, and was meditating future economies for the sake of his boy, when death placed an injunction on those plans. Young Downs was left with little more than sufficient means to enable him to finish his college course and pursue his medical studies for a year or two abroad. He then established himself professionally in New York; that is to say, he took a modest suite of rooms on a ground floor in West Eighteenth Street, and ornamented the right-hand side of the doorway with an engraved brass plate——

The small, semi-detached boy, whose duty it was to keep that brass tablet bright, absorbed the whole of the Doctor's fees for the first six months.

It was in the course of this tentative first half-year that Dr. Downs made the acquaintance of the Tredick family, and had definitely surrendered himself to the charm of Miss Tredick, before he discovered the fact—to him, the fatal fact—that she was very wealthy in her own right, and was the daughter of a very wealthy father. In the eyes of most men these offences would not have seemed without mitigating circumstances; but to Dr. Downs, with his peculiar point of view, they were an insurmountable barrier. A young and impoverished gentleman, who had made a specialty of the human ear and could not get any hearing out of the public, was scarcely a brilliant *parti* for Miss Louise Tredick. His pride and his poverty, combined, closed that gate on Dr. Downs. If he could have been

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poor and not proud, perhaps it would have greatly simplified the situation.

"Since fate has set me penniless on the threshold of life," reflected the Doctor, one evening shortly after his financial discovery, "why did not fate make a pauper of Miss Tredick? Then I could have asked her to be my wife, and faced the world dauntlessly, like thousands of others who have found love a sufficient capital to start housekeeping on. Miss Tredick's grandfather behaved like an idiot, to go and leave her such a preposterous fortune; and her own father is not behaving himself much better. I wish the pair of them could lose their money. If Tredick only were a Wall Street magnate, there would be some chance of them going to pieces some fine day—then I might pick up one of the pieces!"

Unless he should become abruptly rich, or Mr. Tredick and his daughter abruptly poor, there really seemed no way out of it for the young doctor. As the months went by, neither of those things appeared likely to happen. So Newton Downs kept his love to himself, and looked with despairing eyes upon Miss Tredick as a glittering impossibility. It was the desire of the moth for the star, the longing of the dime to be a dollar.

Dr. Downs's unhappiness did not terminate here. There is no man at once so unselfish and selfish as a man in love. In this instance the moth, without the dimmest perception of its own ungenerosity, wanted the star to be a little unhappy also. There was no sacrifice, excepting that of his pride, which Dr. Downs would not have made for Miss Tredick; yet he found it very hard to have a hopeless passion all to himself, and that, clearly, was what he was having. He had no illusions concerning Miss Tredick's attitude toward him. It was one of intimate indifference. A girl does not treat a possible lover with unvarying simplicity and directness. In all its phases love is complex; friendship is not. With other men Miss Tredick coquetted, or almost coquetted; but with him she never dropped that air of mere *camaraderie* which said as distinctly as such a disagreeable thing ought ever to be said, "Of course, between us *that* is out of the question. You cannot offer me the kind of home you would take me from, and I know you slightly, Dr. Downs, if you would be willing to accept rich surroundings at any woman's hand. I like you very much—in a way; and papa likes you very well, too. He sees that you are not at all sentimental." Times without number had Downs translated Miss Tredick's manner into these or similar phrases. He came at last to find a morbid satisfaction in such literary exercises.

Now, Newton Downs had been undergoing this experience for upward of two years, when Mr. Tredick, who appeared indeed to regard him as an exemplary and harmless young man, invited the doctor to take that trip to Liverpool on board the Agamenticus, and to spend a week in London or Paris, if he were so inclined, while the ship was getting ready for the return voyage.

The proposition nearly blinded Dr. Downs with its brilliancy. The vessel was chartered by Mr. Tredick, and there were to be no other passengers. There were four staterooms opening upon the cabin—the one occupied by the captain was to be given up to Dr. Downs. The tenor of Mr. Tredick's invitation left the young man no scruples about accepting it. Mr. Tredick had said: "On account of my wife and daughter, I shouldn't think of crossing without a medical man on board. I know how valuable a professional man's time is. The favor will be wholly on your side if I can persuade you to go with us." So Dr. Downs agreed to go. To have Miss Tredick all to himself, as it were, for eighteen or twenty days—perhaps twenty-five—was an incredible stroke of fortune. How it would grieve Mr. Cornelius Van Coot, the opulent stock-broker, and that young Delancy Duane, who had caused Newton Downs many an uneasy moment!

"If I am not to have earthly happiness with her," mused Dr. Downs, on his walk home that night from Madison Avenue, "I am to have at least some watery happiness! The dull season is

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coming on"—he smiled sarcastically as he thought of that—"and all my patients will have retired to their country seats. Business will not suffer, and I shall escape July and August in town." Then he began making mental vignettes of Miss Tredick in a blue flannel yachting suit, and gave her two small anchors, worked in gold braid, for the standing collar, and chevrons of the same for the left-hand coat-sleeve. "How glorious it will be to promenade the deck in the moonlight after the old folks have turned in! I hope that they will be dreadfully ill, and that we shall keep dreadfully well. The moment we pass Sandy Hook Light, overboard goes Miss Tredick's maid! . . . What pleasure it will be to fetch her wraps, and black Hamburg grapes, and footstools, and iced lemonades—to sit with her under an awning, clear aft, with magazines and illustrated papers"—he instantly resolved to buy out Brentano—"to lean against the taffrail, and watch the long emerald sweep of the waves, and the sweep of Miss Tredick's eyelashes!"

It is to be remarked of Miss Tredick's eyelashes, that they were very long and very dark, and drooped upon a most healthful tint of cheek—neither too rosy nor too pallid—for she belonged to that later type of American girl who rides horseback and is not afraid of a five-mile walk through the woods and fields. There were great dignity, and delicacy, and strength in her tall figure; an innocent fearlessness in her clear, hazel eyes, and, close to, Miss Tredick's eyelashes were worth looking at.

Dr. Downs sat up late that night at the open window of his office—it was in the middle of June—reflecting on the endless pleasant possibilities of the sea voyage. Would he go no further than Liverpool? or would he run up to London, and then over to Paris? In other days he had been very happy in Paris, in the old Latin Quarter! He sat there in the silent room, with no other light than his dreams.

They were not destined to be realized. That first day at sea promised everything; then came the rough weather, and then the terrible storm, which lasted thirty-six hours or more, and all but wrenched the Agamenticus asunder, leaving her on the fifth morning, as has been described, a helpless wreck in the middle of the Atlantic.

During the height of the tempest the passengers were imprisoned in the cabin, for it had been necessary to batten down the hatches. It was so dark below that the lamp suspended over the cabin table was kept constantly burning. The heavy seas on Thursday had put out the fire in the galley, which was afterward demolished, and the cook had retreated to some spot between decks, whence he managed to serve hot coffee and sandwiches to the saloon at mealtimes. Even this became nearly impracticable after Friday noon.

Mr. and Mrs. Tredick were permanently confined to their stateroom, and so desperately ill as to be for the most part unconscious of what was taking place. Miss Tredick's maid, who had been brought along chiefly to look after Mrs. Tredick, was in a like condition. Dr. Downs and Miss Tredick were fair sailors in ordinary weather; it was the strain on their nerves that now kept them "dreadfully well."

Neither thought of closing an eye that fearful Friday night. They passed the whole night in the saloon, seated opposite each other, with the narrow stationary table, which served as a support, between them. They exchanged scarcely a word as they sat listening to the thud of the tremendous waves that broke over the vessel. Indeed, most of the time speech would have been inaudible amid the roar of the wind, the shuffling tramp of the sailors on the deck, the creak of the strained timbers, and the hundred mysterious, half articulate cries that are wrung from the agony of a ship in a storm at sea.

Miss Tredick was very quiet and serious, but apparently not terrified. If an expression of anxiety now and then came into her face, it was when she glanced toward the stateroom where her mother and father were. The door stood open, and Miss Tredick, by turning slightly in the chair, could see them in their berths. They were lying in a kind of lethargic sleep. Save for a touch of unwonted paleness, and certain traces of weariness about the eyes,

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Miss Tredick looked as she might have looked sitting, in some very serious mood, in her own room at home. This was courage pure and simple; for the girl was imaginative in a high degree, and it is the imagination that conspires to undermine one's firmness in critical moments. An unimaginative person's indifference to danger is not courage, it is obtuseness. Miss Tredick had the fullest realization of the peril they were in.

There was in her countenance this night a kind of spiritual beauty that seemed new to the young man. "I don't think she ever looked so much like herself before!" was Newton Downs's inward comment once, as he met her gaze across the narrow table. He could hardly keep his eyes away from her.

Dr. Downs's self-possession was not so absolute as Miss Tredick's. He was a brave man, as she was a brave girl, and the fears which unnerved him at intervals were not on his own account. To him his life weighed light in the balance against her's. That all this buoyant womanhood and rare loveliness should be even remotely menaced with a cruel death was an intolerable thought. And the menace was not remote. There were moments when he wavered in his faith in the divine goodness. There were moments, too, when he had it on his lips to tell Miss Tredick everything that had been in his mind those last two years. But here the old pride whispered to him. Later on, would it not seem as if he had taken advantage of a fortuitous situation to make avowals to which she could not well avoid listening?

It was some time near midnight that the foremast fell with a great crash. Miss Tredick involuntarily stretched out one of her hands to Downs.

"What was that?"

"A heavy spar, or a topmast, must have fallen," said Downs.

In the lull that followed they could hear what sounded like axe-strokes dealt in quick succession. The ship had heeled over frightfully to port. She held that position for perhaps twenty minutes, then slowly righted.

"It was one of the masts," Downs observed; "they have cut it adrift." And Miss Tredick softly withdrew her hand.

After this the lulls grew more frequent and prolonged, and toward daybreak the storm began rapidly to abate. There was very much less motion, and the noises overhead had subsided. The ship's bell, which had made a muffled, intermittent clamor throughout the night, had now given over its tolling. This comparative stillness, succeeding the tumult, seemed to have a poignant quality in it. It was as if the whole world had suddenly stopped, like a clock. The vessel appeared to be making but slight headway. Presently the dawn whitened the stern ports and the little disks of opaque glass let into the deck, and Dr. Downs heard the men at work on the hatches. The long vigil was ended.

"Now go and lie down for an hour or so," he said, rising from the chair with his limbs cramped. "I'll take a glance at the state of things above. I shall never forget this night, Miss Tredick."

"Nor I," she answered; and she looked so lovely sitting there in the twilight of the cabin, with an illuminated oval port behind her head forming a halo, that the young doctor faltered a second or two on the threshold.

At the top of the companion-way he met Captain Saltus on the point of descending. He was still in his oil-skin reefer and overalls, and presented the appearance of a diver who had just been brought exhausted to the surface.

"Good morning, Captain!" cried Dr. Downs, gayly, exhilarated by a full breath of the fresh sea air and a glimpse of the half-risen sun ploughing up opals and rubies in a low bank of fog stretching to the eastward. "We have weathered it, after all, but by Jove——" Something in the firm-set lines of the Captain's mouth caused the Doctor to leave his sentence unfinished. At the same instant a curious wailing sound reached his ear from the forward part of the ship. "What has happened?" he asked, in a lower voice; for they were close to the companion-way, and the door at the foot of the stairs stood open.

"I was just coming to tell you," re-

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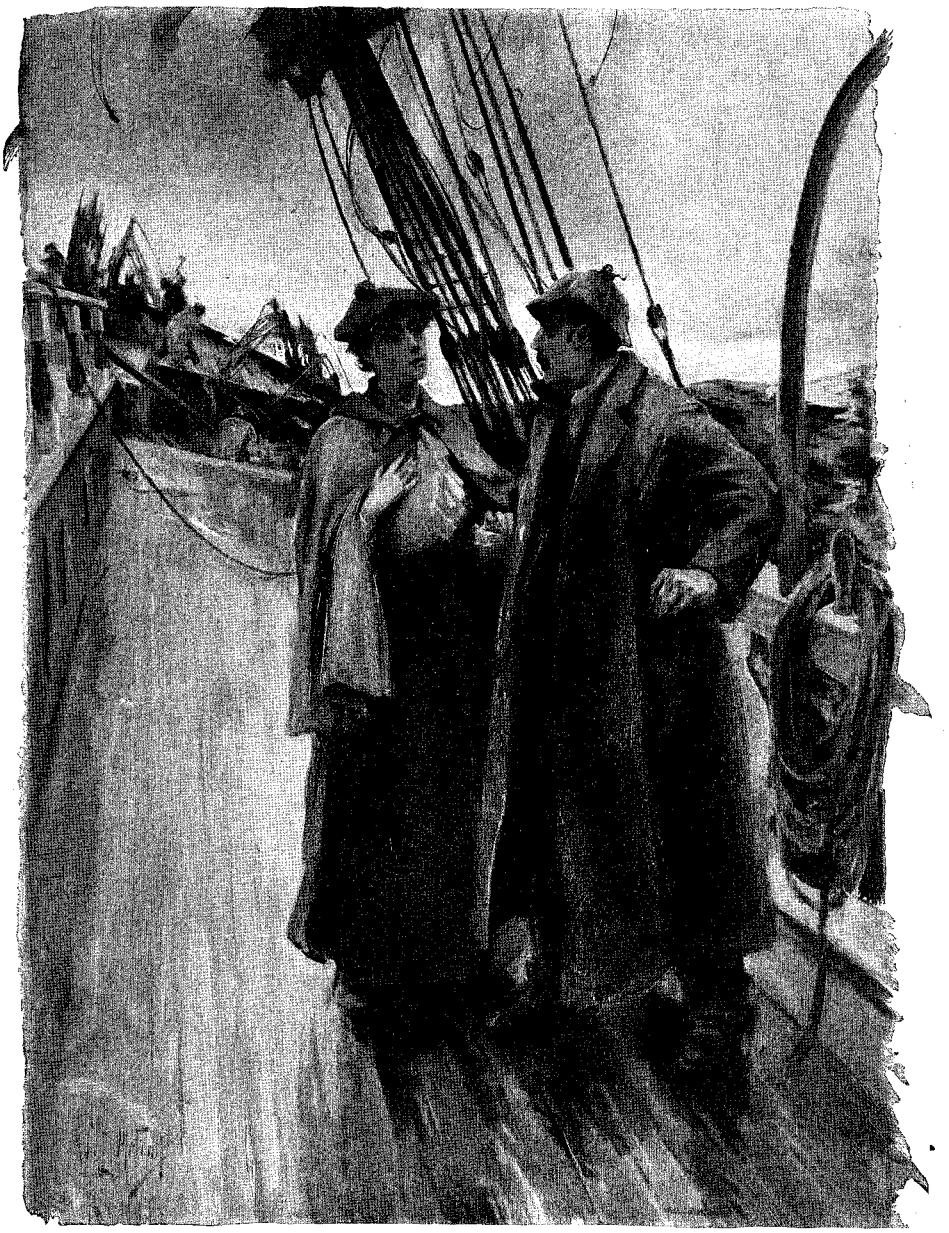

DRAWN BY W. L. METCALF.

"No, you must listen, for these are my dying words. You were blind—oh, so blind!"—Page 211.

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plied the Captain, gravely, "you and Mr. Tredick."

"Is it anything serious?"

"Very serious, as serious as can be."

"They mustn't hear us below. Come over by the rail. What is the matter—has anybody been hurt?"

"We've all been hurt, Dr. Downs," returned the Captain, drawing the back of one hand across his wet brows, "every soul of us! There's an ugly leak somewhere below the water-line, we don't know where, and ain't likely to know, though the men are tearing up the cargo, trying to find out. Perhaps half a dozen seams have started, perhaps a plank. The thing widens. The ship is filling hand over hand, *and the pumps don't work.*"

"But surely the leak will be found!"

"Dr. Downs," said the Captain, "the old Agamenticus has made her last cruise."

He said this very simply. He had faced death on almost every known sea, and from his boyhood had looked upon the ocean as his burial-place. There he was to lie at last, with his ship, or in a shotted hammock, as the case might be. Such end had been his father's, and his grandfather's before him, for he had come of a breed of sea-kings.

"Then we shall have to take to the life-boats!" cried Downs, breaking from the stupor into which the captain's announcement had plunged him.

"Two of them were blown out of the lashings last night; the other two are over yonder."

Dr. Downs's glance followed the pointing of the Captain's finger. Then the young man's chin sank on his breast. "At least we shall die together!" he said softly to himself.

"I don't know where we are," remarked the Captain, casting his eyes over the lonely expanse of sea. "I've not been able to take an observation since Wednesday noon. It's pretty certain that we've been driven out of our course, but how far is guess-work. We're not in the track of vessels, anyhow. I counted on sighting a sail at daybreak. It was our only hope, but it wasn't to be. That's a nasty bit of breeze off there to the east'ard," he added, irrelevantly, following his habit of noting such detail. Then he recollected the business that had brought him to the cabin. "Some of the men for'ard are rigging up a raft; I don't myself set any great value on rafts, as a general thing, but I wish you'd break the matter, kind of incidentally, to Mr. Tredick and the ladies, and tell them to get ready. There isn't too much time to lose, Dr. Downs!"

A figure glided from the companion-hatch and, passing swiftly by Dr. Downs, halted at the Captain's side.

"I have heard what you said, Captain Saltus"—Miss Tredick spoke slowly, but without any tremor in her voice—"and I am not frightened, you see. I want you to answer me one question."

"If I can, Miss Tredick."

"How long will it be before—before the end comes?"

"Well, miss, the wind has died away, and the sea is getting smoother every second. Mr. Bowlsby thinks he will be able to launch the raft within three-quarters of an hour. Then there's the ship-stores——"

"Yes! yes!—but how long?"

"Before we leave the ship, miss?"

"No, before the ship sinks!"

"That I can't say. She may keep afloat two or three hours, if the wind doesn't freshen."

"You are convinced, then, that we are irrevocably lost?"

"Well," returned the Captain, embarrassed by the unexpected composure of the girl, "I would never say that. There's the raft. There is generally a chance of being picked up. Besides, we are always in God's world!"

Miss Tredick bowed her head, and let her hand rest gently for an instant on the Captain's coat-sleeve. In that touch was a furtive and pathetic farewell.

"Miss Tredick," cried the Captain, as he lifted his cap respectfully, "damn me if I'm not proud to sink with so brave a lady, and any man might well be! You're a lesson to those Portuguese, with their leaden images, caterwauling up there in the bows!"

"Now I would like to speak a moment with Dr. Downs," said Miss Tredick, half hesitatingly.

As the Captain slowly walked forward among the crew, there was a dash of salt

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spray on his cheek. The girl paused, and looked after him with a quick, indescribable expression of tenderness in her eyes. Two intrepid souls, moving on diverse planes in this lower sphere, had met in one swift instant of recognition!

During the short dialogue between Captain Saltus and Miss Tredick, Newton Downs had stood leaning against the rail, a few feet distant. As he stood there he noticed that the ship was gradually settling. Until the night before, the idea of death—of death close to, immediate—had never come to him; it had been always something vague, a thing possible, perhaps certain, after years and years. It had been a very real thing to him that night in the storm, yet still indistinct so far as touched him personally; for his thoughts had been less of himself than of Miss Tredick. His thought now was wholly of her. What should be done? Would it not be better to go down in the vessel, than to drift about the Atlantic for days and days on a fragile raft, and endure a thousand deaths? When he contemplated the possible horror of such brief reprieve, his heart turned cold. If it was decided to take to the raft, he would pray that another blow, such as the Captain seemed to predict, might speedily come to end their suffering. The Captain himself had plainly resolved to sink with the ship. Would not that be the more merciful fate for all of them? Had not the thought occurred to Miss Tredick, too?

"Dr. Downs."

The young man raised his head, and saw Miss Tredick standing in front of him. There was a noticeable alteration in her manner; it lacked something of the self-possession it had had while she was addressing the Captain, and her lips were nearly colorless. "Is she losing her splendid courage?" Downs asked himself, with a pang.

"There may not be another opportunity for me to speak with you alone," she said hurriedly, "here or on the raft. How cruel it all seems! The world we knew has suddenly and strangely come to an end for us. I could not say to you in that world what I wish to say to you now. You, too, did not speak your thoughts to me there, and the reason of your silence was unworthy of us both——" Dr. Downs gave a little start, and made a motion to interrupt her, but she stopped him with an imploring gesture. "No, you must listen, for these are my dying words. You were blind—oh, so blind! You did not see me as I was, you did not understand, for I think I loved you from that first day"—then, with a piteous quiver of the lip, she added—"and I shall love you all the rest of my life!"

The young man's first impulse was to kneel at her feet, but the tall, slight figure was now drooping before him. He leaned forward, and took the girl in his arms. She rested her cheek on his shoulder, with her eyes closed. So they stood there, silently, in the red sunrise. Whether life lasted a minute or a century was all one to those lovers on the sinking ship.

The hammering of the men at work on the raft had ceased, and the strange silence that fell upon the vessel was emphasized rather than broken by the intermittent lamentations of the Portuguese sailors crowded into the bow of the ship. Captain Saltus, with a curious expression in his face, leaned against the capstan, watching them.

Suddenly there was a rush of feet, followed by confused cries on the forecastle-deck; a man had shouted something, the import of which did not instantly reach the little group aft.

"Where away?" cried the second-officer, leaping into the lower shrouds.

"On the starboard bow, sir! The fog's been hiding her."

"Where's the glass?—can you make her out?"

"I think it's an Inman liner, sir—she is signalling to us!"

"Thank God!"

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DRAWN BY W. T. SMEDLEY.

"She stepped along, light-footed and eager as a girl."—Page 220.

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THE FLIGHT OF BETSEY LANE.

By Sarah Orne Jewett.

I.

ONE windy morning in May three old women sat together near an open window in the shed chamber of Byfleet Poor-house. The wind was from the northwest, but their window faced the southeast, and they were only visited by an occasional pleasant waft of fresh air. They were close together, knee to knee, picking over a bushel of beans, and commanding a view of the dandelion-starred, green yard below, and of the winding, sandy road that led to the village, two miles away. Some captive bees were scolding among the cobwebs of the rafters overhead, or thumping against the upper panes of glass; two calves were bawling from the barnyard, where some of the men were at work loading a dump-cart and shouting as if everyone were deaf. There was a cheerful feeling of activity, and even an air of comfort, about the Byfleet Poor-house. Almost everyone was possessed of a most interesting past, though there was less to be said about the future. The inmates were by no means distressed or unhappy; many of them retired to this shelter only for the winter season, and would go out presently, some to begin such work as they could still do, others to live in their own small houses; old age had impoverished most of them by limiting their power of endurance; but far from lamenting the fact that they were town charges, they rather liked the change and excitement of a winter residence on the poor-farm. There was a sharp-faced, hard-worked young widow with seven children, who was an exception to the general level of society, because she deplored the change in her fortunes. The older women regarded her with suspicion, and were apt to talk about her in moments like this, when they happened to sit together at their work.

The three bean-pickers were dressed alike in stout, brown ginghams, checked by a white line, and all wore great faded aprons of blue drilling, with sufficient pockets convenient to the right hand. Miss Peggy Bond was a very small, belligerent-looking person, who wore a huge pair of steel-bowed spectacles, holding her sharp chin well up in air, as if to supplement an inadequate nose. She was more than half blind, but the spectacles seemed to face upward instead of square ahead, as if their wearer were always on the sharp lookout for birds. Miss Bond had suffered much personal damage from time to time, because she never took heed where she planted her feet, and so was always tripping and stubbing her bruised way through the world. She had fallen down hatchways and cellarways, and stepped composedly into deep ditches and pasture brooks; but she was proud of stating that she was upsighted, and so was her father before her. At the poor-house, where an unusual malady was considered a distinction, upsightedness was looked upon as a most honorable infirmity. Plain rheumatism, such as afflicted Aunt Lavina Dow, whose twisted hands found even this light work difficult and tiresome—plain rheumatism was something of every-day occurrence, and nobody cared to hear about it. Poor Peggy was a meek and friendly soul, who never put herself forward; she was just like other folks, as she always loved to say, but Mrs. Lavina Dow was a different sort of person altogether, of great dignity, and, occasionally, almost aggressive behavior. The time had been when she could do a good day's work with anybody, but for many years now she had not left the town-farm, being too badly crippled to work; she had no relations or friends to visit, but from an innate love of authority she could not submit to being

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one of those who are forgotten by the world. Mrs. Dow was the hostess and social lawgiver here, where she remembered every inmate and every item of interest for nearly forty years, besides an immense amount of town history and biography for three or four generations back.

She was the dear friend of the third woman, Betsey Lane; together they led thought and opinion, chiefly opinion; and held sway, not only over Byfleet Poor-farm, but also the selectmen and all others in authority. Betsey Lane had spent most of her life as aid-in-general to the respected household of old General Thornton. She had been much trusted and valued, and, at the breaking up of that once large and flourishing family she had been left in good circumstances, what with legacies and her own comfortable savings; but by sad misfortune and lavish generosity everything had been scattered, and after much illness which ended in a stiffened arm and more uncertainty, the good soul had sensibly decided that it was easier for the whole town to support her than for a part of it. She had always hoped to see something of the world before she died; she came of an adventurous, seafaring stock, but had never made a longer journey than to the towns of Danby and Northville, thirty miles away.

They were all old women; but Betsey Lane, who was sixty-nine, and looked much older, was the youngest. Peggy Bond was far on in the seventies, and Mrs. Dow was at least ten years older. She made a great secret of her years, and as she sometimes spoke of events prior to the Revolution, with the assertion of having been an eye-witness, she naturally wore an air of vast antiquity. Her tales were an inexpressible delight to Betsey Lane, who felt younger by twenty years, because her friend and comrade was so unconscious of chronological limitations.

The bushel basket of cranberry beans was within easy reach, and each of the pickers had filled her lap from it again and again. The shed chamber was not an unpleasant place in which to sit at work, with its traces of seed-corn hanging from the brown cross-beams, its spare churns and dusty loom, and rickety wool-wheels, and a few bits of old furniture. In one far corner was a wide board of dismal use and suggestion, and close beside it an old cradle. There was a battered chest of drawers where the keeper of the Poor-house kept his garden-seeds, with the withered remains of three seed cucumbers ornamenting the top. Nothing beautiful could be discovered, nothing interesting; but there was something usable and homely about the place; it was the favorite and untroubled bower of the bean-pickers, to which they might retreat unmolested from the public apartments of this rustic institution.

Betsey Lane blew away the chaff from her handful of beans. The spring breeze blew the chaff back again, and sifted it over her face and shoulders. She rubbed it out of her eyes impatiently, and happened to notice old Peggy holding her own handful high as if it were an oblation, and turning her queer, up-tilted head this way and that, to look at the beans sharply, as if she were first cousin to a hen.

"There, Miss Bond, 'tis kind of botherin' work for you, ain't it?" Betsey inquired compassionately.

"I feel to enjoy it, anything that I can do my own way so," responded Peggy. "I like to do my part. Ain't that old Mis' Fales comin' up the road? It sounds like her step."

The others looked, but they were not far-sighted, and for a moment Peggy had the advantage. Mrs. Fales was not a favorite.

"I hope she ain't comin' here to put up this spring. I guess she won't now, it's gettin' so late," said Betsey Lane. "She likes to go rovin' soon as the roads is settled."

"'Tis Mis' Fales!" said Peggy Bond, listening with solemn anxiety. "There, do let's pray her by!"

"I guess she's headin' for her cousin's folks up Beech Hill way," said Betsey, presently. "If she'd left her daughter's this mornin', she'd have got just about as far as this. I kind o' wish she had stepped in just to pass the time o' day, long's she wa'n't going to make no stop."

There was a silence as to further

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speech in the shed chamber; and even the calves were quiet in the barn-yard. The men had all gone away to the field where corn-planting was going on. The beans clicked steadily into the wooden measure at the pickers' feet. Betsey Lane began to sing a hymn, and the others joined in as best they might, like autumnal crickets; their voices were sharp and cracked, with now and then a few low notes of plaintive tone. Betsey herself could sing pretty well, but the others could only make a kind of accompaniment. Their voices ceased altogether at the higher notes.

"Oh, my! I wish I had the means to go to the Centennial," mourned Betsey Lane, stopping so suddenly that the others had to go on croaking and shrilling without her for a moment before they could stop. "It seems to me as if I can't die happy 'less I do," she added; "I ain't never seen nothin' of the world, an' here I be."

"What if you was as old as I be?" suggested Mrs. Dow, pompously. "You've got time enough yet, Betsey; don't you go an' despair. I knowed of a woman that went clean round the world four times when she was past eighty, an' enjoyed herself real well. Her folks followed the sea; she had three sons an' a daughter married—all shipmasters, and she'd been with her own husband when they was young; she was left a widder early, and fetched up her family herself—a real stirrin', smart woman. After they'd got married off, an' settled, an' was doing well, she come to be lonesome; and first she tried to stick it out alone, but she wa'n't one that could; and she got a notion she hadn't nothin' before her but her last sickness, and she wa'n't a person that enjoyed havin' other folks do for her. So one on her boys—I guess 'twas the oldest—said he was going to take her to sea; there was ample room, an' he was sailin' a good time o' year for the Cape o' Good Hope an' way up to some o' them tea-ports in the Chiny seas. She was all high to go, but it made a sight o' talk at her age; an' the minister made it a subject o' prayer the last Sunday, and all the folks took a last leave; but she said to some she'd fetch 'em home something real pritty, and so she did. And then they come home t'other way, round the Horn, an' she done so well, an' was such a sight o' company, the other child'n was jealous, an' she promised she'd go a v'y'ge long o' each on 'em. She was as sprightly a person as ever I see; an' could speak well o' what she'd seen."

"Did she die to sea?" asked Peggy, with interest.

"No, she died to home between v'y'ges, or she'd gone to sea again. I was to her funeral She liked her son George's ship the best; 'twas the one she was going on to Callao. They said the men aboard all called her 'Gran'-ma'am,' an' she kep' em mended up, an' would go below and tend to 'em if they was sick. She might 'a been alive an' enjoyin' of herself a good many years but for the kick of a cow; 'twas a new cow out of a drove, a dreadful unruly beast."

Mrs. Dow stopped for breath, and reached down for a new supply of beans; her empty apron was gray with soft chaff. Betsey Lane, still pondering on the Centennial, began to sing another verse of her hymn, and again the old women joined her. At this moment some strangers came driving round into the yard from the front of the house. The turf was soft, and our friends did not hear the horses' steps. Their voices cracked and quavered; it was a funny little concert, and a lady in an open carriage just below listened with sympathy and amusement.

II.

"Betsey! Betsey! Miss Lane!" a voice called eagerly at the foot of the stairs that led up from the shed. "Betsey! There's a lady here wants to see you right away."

Betsey was dazed with excitement, like a country child who knows the rare pleasure of being called out of school. "Lor', I ain't fit to go down, be I?" she faltered, looking anxiously at her friends; but Peggy was gazing even nearer to the zenith than usual, in her excited effort to see down into the yard, and Mrs. Dow only nodded somewhat jealously and said that she

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guessed 'twas nobody would do her any harm. She rose ponderously, while Betsey hesitated, being, as they would have said, all of a twitter. "It is a lady, certain," Mrs. Dow assured her; "'tain't often there's a lady comes here."

"While there was any of Mis' Gen'ral Thornton's folks left, I wa'n't without visits from the gentry," said Betsey Lane, turning back proudly at the head of the stairs, with a touch of old-world pride and sense of high station. Then she disappeared and closed the door behind her at the stair-foot with a decision quite unwelcome to the friends above.

"She needn't 'a' been so dreadful 'fraid anybody was goin' to listen. I guess we've got folks to ride an' see us, or had once, if we hain't now," said Miss Peggy Bond, plaintively.

"I expect 'twas only the wind shoved it to," said Aunt Lavina. "Betsey is one that gits flustered easier than some. I wish 'twas somebody to take her off an' give her a kind of a good time; she's young to settle down 'long of old folks like us. Betsey's got a notion o' rovin' such as ain't my natur', but I should like to see her satisfied. She'd been a very understandin' person, if she had the advantages that some does."

"'Tis so," said Peggy Bond, tilting her chin high. "I suppose you can't hear nothin' they're saying? I feel my hearin' ain't up to what it was. I can hear things close to me well as ever; but there, hearin' ain't everything; 'tain't as if we lived where there was more goin' on to hear. Seems to me them folks is stoppin' a good while."

"They surely be," agreed Lavina Dow. "I expect it's somethin' particular. There ain't none of the Thornton folks left, except one o' the gran'darters, an' I've often heard Betsey remark that she should never see her more, for she lives to London. Strange how folks feels contented in them strayaway places off to the ends of the airth."

The flies and bees were buzzing against the hot window-panes; the handfuls of beans were clicking into the brown wooden measure. A bird came and perched on the window-sill and then flitted away toward the blue sky. Below, in the yard, Betsey Lane stood talking with the lady; she had put her blue drilling apron over her head, and her face was shining with delight.

"Lor, dear," she said, for at least the third time, "I remember ye when I first see ye; an awful pritty baby you was, an' they all said you looked just like the old Gin'ral. Be you goin' back to foreign parts right away?"

"Yes, I'm going back; you know that all my children are there. I wish I could take you with me for a visit," said the charming young guest. "I'm going to carry over some of the pictures and furniture from the old house; I didn't care half so much for them when I was younger, as I do now. Perhaps next summer we shall all come over for awhile. I should like to see my girls and boys playing under the pines."

"I wish you re'lly was livin' to the old place," said Betsey Lane. Her imagination was not swift; she needed time to think over all that was being told her, and she could not fancy the two strange houses across the sea. The old Thornton house was to her mind the most delightful and elegant in the world.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" asked Mrs. Strafford, kindly, "anything that I can do for you myself, before I go away? I shall be writing to you, and sending some pictures of the children, and you must let me know how you are getting on."

"Yes, there is one thing, darlin'. If you could stop in the village an' pick me out a pritty, little, small lookin' glass, that I can keep for my own an' have to remember you by. 'Tain't that I want to set me above the rest o' the folks, but I was always used to havin' my own when I was to your grandma's. There's very nice folks here, some on 'em, and I'm better off than if I was able to keep house; but sence you ask me, that's the only thing I feel cropin' about. What be you goin' right back for? ain't you goin' to see the great fair to Philadelphy, that everybody talks about?"

"No," said Mrs. Strafford, laughing at this eager and almost convicting question. "No, I'm going back next week.

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If I were, I believe that I should take you with me. Good-by, dear old Betsey; you make me feel as if I were a little girl again; you look just the same."

For full five minutes the old woman stood out in the sunshine, dazed with delight, and majestic with a sense of her own consequence. She held something tight in her hand, without thinking what it might be; but just as the friendly mistress of the Poor-farm came out to hear the news, she tucked the roll of money into the bosom of her brown gingham dress. "'Twas my dear Mis' Katy Strafford," she turned to say proudly. "She come way over from London; she's been sick; they thought the voyage would do her good. She said most the first thing she had on her mind was to come an' find me, and see how I was, an' if I was comfortable; an' now she's goin' right back. She's got two splendid houses; an' said how she wished I was there to look after things —she remembered I was always her gran'ma's right hand. Oh! it does so carry me back, to see her! Seems if all the rest on 'em must be there together to the old house. There, I must go right up an' tell Mis' Dow an' Peggy."

"Dinner's all ready—I was just goin' to blow the horn for the men-folks," said the keeper's wife. "They'll be right down. I expect you've got along smart with them beans—all three of you together;" but Betsey's mind roved so high and so far at that moment that no achievements of bean-picking could lure it back.

III.

The long table in the great kitchen soon gathered its company of waifs and strays—creatures of improvidence and misfortune, and the irreparable victims of old age. The dinner was satisfactory, and there was not much delay for conversation. Peggy Bond and Mrs. Dow and Betsey Lane always sat together at one end, with an air of putting the rest of the company below the salt. Betsey was still flushed with excitement, in fact she could not eat as much as usual, and she looked up from time to time, expectantly, as if she were likely to be asked to speak of her guest; but everybody was hungry, and even Mrs. Dow broke in upon some attempted confidences, by asking inopportunely for a second potato. There were nearly twenty at the table, counting the keeper and his wife and two children, noisy little persons who had come from school with the small flock belonging to the poor widow, who sat just opposite our friends. She finished her dinner before any one else, and pushed her chair back —she always helped with the housework —a thin, sorry, bad-tempered-looking poor soul, whom grief had sharpened instead of softening. "I expect you feel too fine to set with common folks," she said enviously to Betsey.

"Here I be a settin'," responded Betsey, calmly. "I don' know's I behave more unbecomin' than usual." Betsey prided herself upon her good and proper manners; but the rest of the company who would have liked to hear the bit of morning news were now defrauded of that pleasure. The wrong note had been struck; there was a silence after the clatter of knives and plates, and one by one the cheerful town charges disappeared. The bean-picking had been finished, and there was a call for any of the women who felt like planting corn; so Peggy Bond, who could follow the line of hills pretty fairly, and Betsey herself, who was still equal to anybody at that work, and Mrs. Dow, all went out to the field together. Aunt Lavina labored slowly up the yard, carrying a light splint-bottomed kitchen chair and her knitting-work, and sat near the stone wall on a gentle rise where she could see the pond and the green country, and exchange a word with her friends as they came and went up and down the rows. Betsey vouchsafed a word now and then about Mrs. Strafford, but you would have thought that she had been suddenly elevated to Mrs. Strafford's own cares and the responsibilities attending them, and had little in common with her old associates. Mrs. Dow and Peggy knew well that these high-feeling times never lasted long, and so they waited with as much patience as they could muster. They were by no means without that true tact which is only another word for unselfish sympathy.

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The strip of corn land ran along the side of a great field; at the upper end of it was a field-corner thicket of young maples and walnut saplings, the children of a great nut-tree that marked the boundary. Once, when Betsey Lane found herself alone near this shelter at the end of her row, the other planters having lagged behind beyond the rising ground, she looked stealthily about and then put her hand inside her gown and for the first time took out the money that Mrs. Strafford had given her. She turned it over and over with an astonished look; there were new bank-bills for a hundred dollars. Betsey gave a funny little shrug of her shoulders, came out of the bushes and took a step or two on the narrow edge of turf, as if she were going to dance; then she hastily tucked away her treasure, and stepped discreetly down into the soft harrowed and hoed land, and began to drop corn again, five kernels to a hill. She had seen the top of Peggy Bond's head over the knoll, and now Peggy herself came entirely into view, gazing upward to the skies, and stumbling more or less, but counting the corn by touch and twisting her head about anxiously to gain advantage over her uncertain vision. Betsey made a friendly, inarticulate little sound as they passed; she was thinking that somebody said once that Peggy's eyesight might be remedied if she could go to Boston to the hospital; but that was so remote and impossible an undertaking that no one had ever taken the first step. Betsey Lane's brown old face suddenly worked with excitement, but in a moment more she regained her usual firm expression, and spoke carelessly to Peggy as she turned and came alongside.

The high spring wind of the morning had quite fallen; it was a lovely May afternoon. The woods about the field to the northward were full of birds, and the young leaves scarcely hid the solemn shapes of a company of crows that patiently attended the corn-planting. Two of the men had finished their hoeing, and were busy with the construction of a scarecrow; they knelt in the furrows, chuckling and looking over some forlorn, discarded garments. It was a time-honored custom to make the scarecrow resemble one of the Poor-house family; and this year they intended to have Mrs. Lavina Dow protect the field in effigy; last year it was the counterfeit of Betsey Lane who stood on guard with an easily recognized quilted hood and the remains of a valued shawl that one of the calves had found airing on a fence and chewed to pieces. Behind the men was the foundation for this rustic attempt at statuary—an upright stake and bar in the form of a cross. This stood on the highest part of the field, and as the men knelt near it and the quaint figures of the corn-planters went and came, the scene gave a curious suggestion of foreign life. It was not like New England; the presence of the rude cross appealed strangely to the imagination.

IV.

Life flowed so smoothly, for the most part, at the Byfleet Poor-farm, that nobody knew what to make, later in the summer, of a strange disappearance. All the elder inmates were familiar with illness and death, and the poor pomp of a town-pauper's funeral. The comings and goings and the various misfortunes of those who composed this strange family related only through its disasters, hardly served for the excitement and talk of a single day. Now that the June days were at their longest, the old people were sure to wake earlier than ever; but one morning, to the astonishment of everyone, Betsey Lane's bed was empty; the sheets and blankets, which were her own, and guarded with jealous care, were carefully folded and placed on a chair not too near the window, and Betsey had flown. Nobody had heard her go down the creaking stairs. The kitchen door was unlocked, and the old watch-dog lay on the step outside in the early sunshine, wagging his tail and looking wise, as if he were left on guard and meant to keep the fugitive's secret.

"Never knowed her to do nothin' afore, 'thout talking it over a fortnight and paradin' off when we could all see her," ventured a spiteful voice. "Guess we can wait till night to hear 'bout it."

Mrs. Dow looked sorrowful and shook her head. "Betsey had an aunt on her

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mother's side, that went and drownded of herself; she was a pritty-appearing woman as ever you see."

"Perhaps she's gone to spend the day with Decker's folks," suggested Peggy Bond. "She always takes an extra early start; she was speakin' lately o' going up their way;" but Mrs. Dow shook her head with a most melancholy look. "I'm impressed that something's befell her," she insisted. "I heard her a groanin' in her sleep. I was wakeful the forepart o' the night—'tis very unusual with me, too."

"'Twa'n't like Betsey not to leave us any word," said the other old friend with more resentment than melancholy. They sat together almost in silence that morning in the shed-chamber. Mrs. Dow was sorting and cutting rags, and Peggy braided them into long ropes to be made into mats at a later date. If they had only known where Betsey Lane had gone, they might have talked about it until dinner-time at noon; but failing this new subject they could take no interest in any of their old ones. Out in the field the corn was well up, and the men were hoeing. It was a hot morning in the shed-chamber, and the woollen rags were dusty and hot to handle.

V.

Byfleet people knew each other well, and when this mysteriously absent person did not return to the town-farm at the end of a week, public interest became much excited; and presently it was ascertained that Betsey Lane was neither making a visit to her friends the Deckers on Birch Hill, nor to any nearer acquaintances; in fact she had disappeared altogether from her wonted haunts. Nobody remembered to have seen her pass, hers had been such an early flitting; and when somebody thought of her having gone away by train, he was laughed at for forgetting that the earliest morning train from South Byfleet, the nearest station, did not start until long after eight o'clock; and if Betsey had designed to be one of the passengers, she would have started along the road at seven, and been seen and known of all women. There was not a kitchen in that part of Byfleet that did not have windows toward the road. Conversation rarely left the level of the neighborhood gossip: to see Betsey Lane, in her best clothes, at that hour in the morning, would have been the signal for much exercise of imagination; but as day after day went by without news, the curiosity of those who knew her best turned slowly into fear, and at last Peggy Bond again gave utterance to the belief that Betsey had either gone out in the early morning and put an end to her life, or that she had gone to the Centennial. Some of the people at table were moved to loud laughter—it was at supper-time on a Sunday night—but others listened with great interest.

"She never'd put on her good clothes to drownd herself," said the widow. "She might have thought 'twas good as takin' 'em with her, though. Old folks has wandered off an' got lost in the woods afore now."

Mrs. Dow and Peggy resented this impertinent remark, but deigned to take no notice of the speaker. "She wouldn't have wore her best clothes to the Centennial, would she?" mildly inquired Peggy, bobbing her head toward the ceiling. "'Twould be a shame to spoil your best things in such a place. An' I don't know of her havin' any money; there's the end o' that."

"You're bad as old Mis' Bland that used to live neighbor to our folks," said one of the old men. "She was dreadful precise, an' she so begretched to wear a good alapacca dress that was left to her, that it hung in a press forty year an' baited the moths at last."

"I often seen Mis' Bland a-goin' in to meetin' when I was a young girl," said Peggy Bond, approvingly. "She was a good appearin' woman, an' she left property."

"Wish she'd left it to me, then," said the poor soul opposite, glancing at her pathetic row of children: but it was not good manners at the farm to deplore one's situation, and Mrs. Dow and Peggy only frowned. "Where do you suppose Betsey can be?" said Mrs. Dow, for the twentieth time. "She didn't have no money. I know she ain't gone

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far if it's so that she's yet alive. She's b'en real pinched all the spring."

"Perhaps that lady that come one day give her some," the keeper's wife suggested, mildly.

"Then Betsy would have told me," said Mrs. Dow, with injured dignity.

VI.

On the morning of her disappearance, Betsey rose even before the pewee and the English sparrow, and dressed herself quietly, though with trembling hands, and stole out of the kitchen door like a plunderless thief. The old dog licked her hand and looked at her anxiously; the tortoise-shell cat rubbed against her best gown, and trotted away up the yard, then she turned anxiously and came after the old woman, following faithfully until she had to be driven back. Betsey was used to long country excursions afoot; she dearly loved the early morning; and finding that there was no dew to trouble her, she began to follow pasture paths and short cuts across the fields, surprising here and there a flock of sleepy sheep, or a startled calf that rustled out from the bushes. The birds were pecking their breakfast from bush and turf; and hardly any of the wild inhabitants of that rural world were enough alarmed by her presence to do more than flutter away if they chanced to be in her path. She stepped along, light-footed and eager as a girl, dressed in her neat old straw bonnet and black gown, and carrying a few belongings in her best bundle handkerchief, one that her only brother had brought home from the East Indies fifty years before. There was an old crow perched as sentinel on a small, dead pine-tree where he could warn friends who were pulling up the sprouted corn in a field close by; but he only gave a contemptuous caw as the adventurer appeared, and she shook her bundle at him in revenge, and laughed to see him so clumsy as he tried to keep his footing on the twigs. "Yes, I be;" she assured him. "I'm a-goin' to Pheladelphy, to the Centennial, same's other folks. I'd jest as soon tell ye's not, old crow;" and Betsey laughed aloud in pleased content with herself and her daring, as she walked along. She had only two miles to go to the station at South Byfleet, and she felt for the money now and then, and found it safe enough. She took great pride in the success of her escape, and especially in the long concealment of her wealth. Not a night had passed since Mrs. Strafford's visit that she had not slept with the roll of money under her pillow by night, and buttoned safe inside her dress by day. She knew that everybody would offer advice and even commands about the spending or saving of it; and she brooked no interference.

The last mile of the foot-path to South Byfleet was along the railway-track; and Betsey began to feel in haste, though it was still nearly two hours to train time. She looked anxiously forward and back along the rails every few minutes, for fear of being run over; and at last she caught sight of an engine that was apparently coming toward her, and took flight into the woods before she could gather courage to follow the path again. The freight train proved to be at a stand-still, waiting at a turn-out; and some of the men were straying about, eating their early breakfast comfortably in this time of leisure. As the old woman came up to them, she stopped too, for a moment of rest and conversation.

"Where be ye goin'?" she asked, pleasantly; and they told her. It was to the town where she had to change cars and take the great through train; a point of geography which she had learned from evening talks between the men at the farm.

"What'll ye carry me there for?"

"We don't run no passenger cars," said one of the young fellows, laughing. "What makes you in such a hurry?"

"I'm startin' for Pheladelphy, an' it's a gre't ways to go."

"So 'tis; but you're consid'able early if you're makin' for the eight-forty train. See here! you haven't got a needle an' thread 'long of you in that bundle, have you? If you'll sew me on a couple o' buttons, I'll give ye a free ride. I'm in a sight o' distress an' none o' the fellows is provided with as much as a bent pin."

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"You poor boy! I'll have you seen to, in half a minute. I'm troubled with a stiff arm, but I'll do the best I can."

The obliging Betsey seated herself stiffly on the slope of the embankment and found her thread and needle with utmost haste. Two of the train-men stood by and watched the careful stitches, and even offered her a place as spare brakeman, so that they might keep her near; and Betsey took the offer with considerable seriousness, only thinking it necessary to assure them that she was getting most too old to be out in all weathers. An express went by like an earthquake, and she was presently hoisted on board an empty box-car, by two of her new and flattering acquaintances, and found herself before noon at the end of the first stage of her journey, without having spent a cent, and furnished with any amount of thrifty advice. One of the young men, being compassionate of her unprotected state as a traveller, advised her to find out the widow of an uncle of his in Philadelphia, saying despairingly that he couldn't tell her just how to find the house; but Miss Betsey Lane said that she had an English tongue in her head, and should be sure to find whatever she was looking for. This unexpected incident of the freight-train was the reason why everybody about the South Byfleet station insisted that no such person had taken passage by the regular train that same morning, and why there were those who persuaded themselves that Miss Betsey Lane was probably lying at the bottom of the poor-farm pond.

VII.

Nobody in these United States has ever felt half grateful enough to the promoters of the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia. It was the first great national occasion of general interest and opportunity for cultivation; as a people we were untravelled and unconvinced of many things until we were given this glimpse of the treasures and customs of the world. Without it we should never have been ready for the more advanced lessons of the great Columbian Fair at Chicago.

"Land sakes!" said Miss Betsey Lane, as she watched a Turkish person parading by in his red fez, "I call it somethin' like the day o' judgment! I wish I was goin' to stop a month, but I daresay 'twould be the death o' my poor old bones."

She was leaning against the barrier of a patent-pop-corn establishment which had given her a sudden reminder of home and the winter nights when the sharp-kerneled little red and yellow ears were brought out, and old Uncle Eph Flanders sat by the kitchen stove, and solemnly filled a great wooden chopping tray for the refreshment of the company. She had wandered and loitered and looked until her eyes and head had grown numb and unreceptive; but it is only unimaginative persons who can be really astonished. The imagination can always outrun the possible and actual sights and sounds of the world; and this plain old body from Byfleet rarely found anything rich and splendid enough to surprise her. She saw the wonders of the West and the splendors of the East with equal calmness and satisfaction; she had always known that there was an amazing world outside the boundaries of Byfleet. There was a piece of paper in her pocket on which was marked, in her clumsy handwriting, "If Betsey Lane should meet with accident, notify the selectmen of Byfleet;" but having made this slight provision for the future, she had thrown herself boldly into the sea of strangers, and then had made the joyful discovery that friends were to be found at every turn.

There was something delightfully companionable about Betsey; she had a way of suddenly looking up over her big spectacles with a reassuring and expectant smile as if you were going to speak to her, and you generally did. She must have found out where hundreds of people came from and whom they had left at home, and what they thought of the great show, as she sat on a bench to rest, or leaned over the railings where free luncheons were afforded by the makers of hot waffles and molasses candy and fried potatoes; and there was not a night when she did not return to her lodgings with a pocket

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crammed with samples of spool cotton and nobody knows what. She had already collected small presents for al-

"Then she hastily tucked away her treasure."—Page 218.

most everybody she knew at home, and she was such a pleasant, beaming old country body, so unmistakably appreciative and interested, that nobody ever thought of wishing that she would move on. Nearly all the busy people of the Exhibition called her either Aunty or Grandma at once, and made little pleasures for her as best they could. She was a delightful contrast to the indifferent, stupid crowd that drifted along, with eyes fixed at the same level, and seeing, even on that level, nothing for fifty feet at a time. "What be you making here, dear?" Betsey Lane would ask joyfully, and the most perfunctory guardian hastened to explain. She squandered money as she had never had the pleasure of doing before; and this hastened the day when she must return to Byfleet. She was always inquiring if there were any spectacle-sellers at hand, and received occasional directions; but it was a difficult place for her to find her way about in, and the very last day of her stay arrived before she found an exhibitor of the desired sort, an oculist and instrument maker.

"I called to get some specs for a friend that's up-sighted," she gravely informed the salesman, to his extreme amusement. "She's dreadful troubled, and jerks her head up like a hen a-drinkin'. She's got a blur a-growin' an' spreadin', an' sometimes she can see out to one side on't, and more times she can't."

"Cataracts," said a middle-aged gentleman at her side; and Betsey Lane turned to regard him with approval and curiosity.

"'Tis Peggy Bond I was mentioning, of Byfleet Poor-farm," she explained. "I count on gettin' some glasses to relieve her trouble, if there's any to be found."

"Glasses won't do her any good," said the stranger. "Suppose you come and sit down on this bench, and tell me all about it. First, where is Byfleet?" and Betsey gave the directions at length.

"I thought so," said the surgeon. "How old is this friend of yours?"

Betsey cleared her throat decisively and smoothed her gown over her knees as if it were an apron; then she turned to take a good look at her new acquaintance as they sat on the rustic bench together. "Who be you, sir, I should like to know?" she asked, in a friendly tone.

"My name's Dunster."

"I take it you're a doctor," continued Betsey, as if they had overtaken each other walking from Byfleet to South Byfleet on a summer morning.

"I'm a doctor; part of one at least," said he. "I know more or less about eyes; and I spend my summers down on the shore at the mouth of your river; some day I'll come up and look at this person. How old is she?"

"Peggy Bond is one that never tells her age; 'tain't come quite up to where she'll begin to brag of it, you see," explained Betsey, reluctantly; "but I know her to be nigh to seventy-six, one way or t'other. Her an' Mrs. Mary Ann Chick was same year's child'n, and Peggy knows I know it, an' two or three times when we've be'n in the buryin'-ground where Mary Ann lays an' has

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her dates right on her headstone, I couldn't bring Peggy to take no sort o' notice. I will say she makes, at times, a convenience of being up-sighted. But there, I feel for her, everybody does; it keeps her stubbin' an' trippin' against everything—beakin' an' gazin' up the way she has to."

"Yes, yes," said the doctor, whose eyes were twinkling, "I'll come and look after her, with your town doctor, this summer—some time in the last of July or first of August."

"You'll find occupation," said Betsey, not without an air of patronage. "Most of us to the Byfleet farm has got our ails, now I tell ye. You ain't got no bitters that'll take a dozen years right off an ol' lady's shoulders?"

The busy man smiled pleasantly, and shook his head as he went away "Dunster," said Betsey to herself, soberly committing the new name to her sound memory. "Yes, I mustn't forgit to speak of him to the doctor, as he directed. I do' know now as Peggy would vally herself quite so much accordin' to, if she had her eyes fixed same as other folks. I expect there wouldn't been a smarter woman in town, though, if she'd had proper chance. Now I've done what I set to do for her, I do believe, an' 'twan't glasses, neither I'll git her a pritty little shawl with that money I laid aside. Peggy Bond ain't got a pritty shawl. I always wanted to have a real good time an' now I'm havin' it."

"It was not like New England; the presence of the rude cross appealed strangely to the imagination."—Page 218.

VIII.

Two or three days later, two pathetic figures might have been seen crossing the slopes of the poor-farm field, toward the low shores of Byfleet pond. It was early in the morning, and the stubble of the lately mown grass was wet with rain and hindering to old feet. Peggy Bond was more blundering and liable to stray in the wrong direction than usual; it was one of the days when she could hardly see at all. Aunt Lavina Dow was unusually clumsy of movement, and stiff in the joints; she had not been so far from the house for three years. The morning breeze filled the gathers of her wide gingham skirt and aggravated the size of her unwieldy figure. She supported herself with a stick, and trusted beside to the fragile support of Peggy's arm. They were talking together in whispers.

"Oh, my sakes!" exclaimed Peggy, moving her small head from side to side. "Hear you wheeze, Mis' Dow! This may be the death o' you; there, do go slow! You set here on the side hill, an' le' me go try if I can see."

"It needs more eyesight than you've got," said Mrs. Dow, panting between the words. "Oh! to think how spry I was in my young days, an' here I be now, the full of a door, an' all my complaints so aggravated by my size. 'Tis hard! 'tis hard! but I'm a doin' of all this for pore Betsey's sake. I know they've all laughed, but I look to see her ris' to the top o' the pond this day, 'tis just nine days since she departed; an' say what they may, I know she hove herself in. It run in her family; Betsey had an aunt that done just so, an' she ain't be'n like herself, a broodin' an' hivin' away alone, an' nothin' to say to you an' me that was always sich good company all together. Somethin' sprung her mind, now I tell ye, Mis' Bond."

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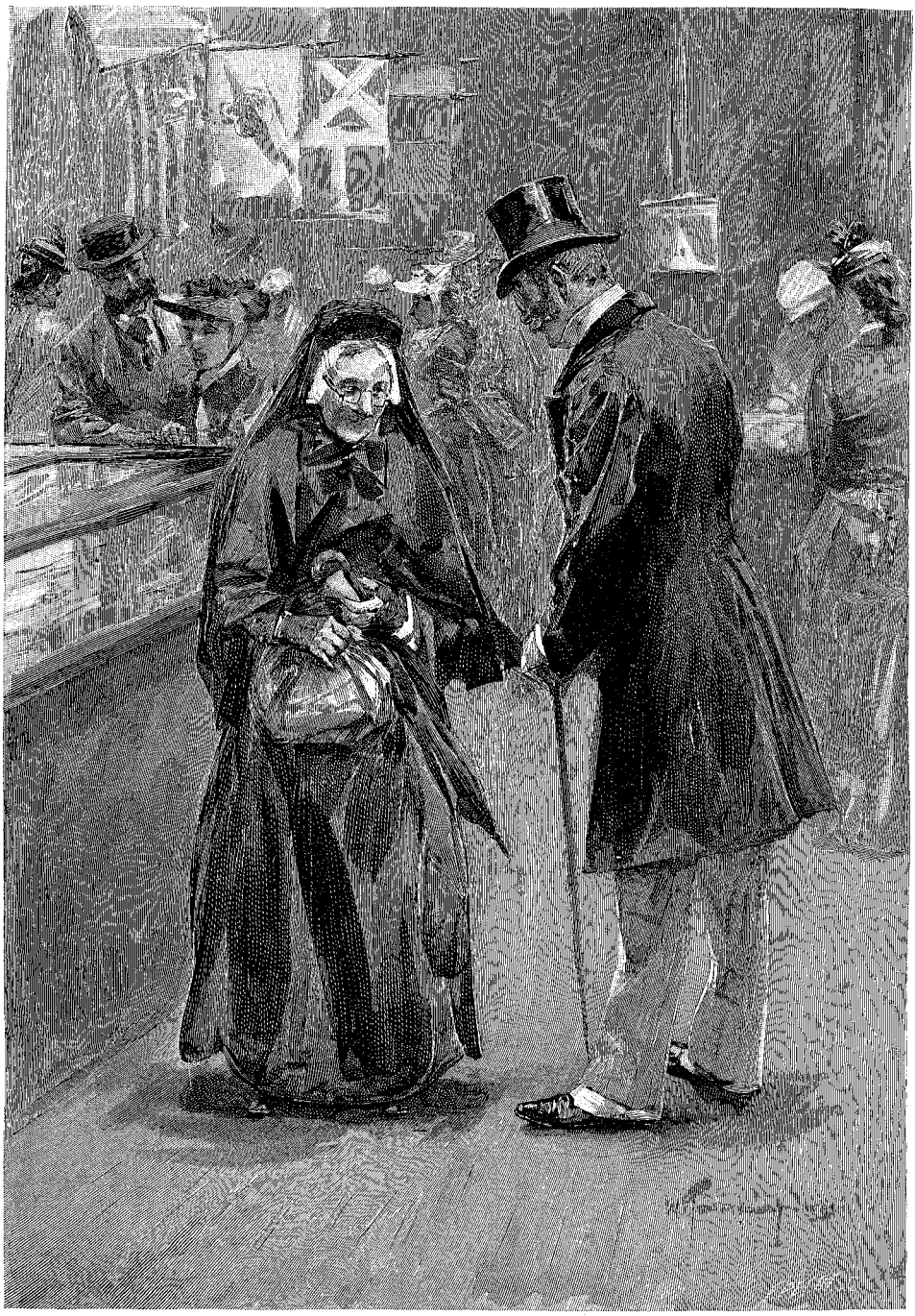

DRAWN BY W. T. SMEDLEY. ENGRAVED BY F. A. PETTIT.

"Betsey Lane turned to regard him with approval and curiosity."—Page 222.

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"I feel to hope we shan't find her, I must say," faltered Peggy. It was plain that Mrs. Dow was the captain of this doleful expedition. "I guess she ain't never thought o' drowndin' of herself, Mis' Dow; she's gone off a visitin' way over to the other side o' South Byfleet, some thinks she's gone to the Centennial even now!"

"She hadn't no proper means, I tell ye," wheezed Mrs. Dow, indignantly; "an' if you prefer that others should find her floatin' to the top this day, instid of us that's her best friends, you can step back to the house."

They walked on in aggrieved silence. Peggy Bond trembled with excitement, but her companion's firm grasp never wavered, and so they came to the narrow, gravelly margin and stood still. Peggy tried in vain to see the glittering water and the pond-lilies that starred it; she knew that they must be there; once, years ago, she had caught fleeting glimpses of them, and she never forgot what she had once seen. The clear, blue sky overhead, the dark pine-woods beyond the pond, were all clearly pictured in her mind. "Can't you see nothin'?" she faltered; "I believe I'm wuss'n up-sighted this day. I'm going to be blind."

"No," said Lavina Dow, solemnly; "no, there ain't nothin' whatever, Peggy. I hope to mercy she ain't——"

"Why, whoever'd expected to find you 'way out here!" exclaimed a brisk and cheerful voice. There stood Betsey Lane herself, close behind them, having just emerged from a thicket of alders that grew close by. She was following the short way homeward from the railroad.

"Why, what's the matter, Mis' Dow? You ain't overdoin', be ye? an' Peggy's all of a flutter. What in the name o' natur' ails ye?"

"There ain't nothin' the matter, as I knows on," responded the leader of this fruitless expedition. "We only thought we'd take a stroll this pleasant mornin'," she added, with sublime self-possession. "Where've you be'n, Betsey Lane?"

"To Pheladelphy, ma'am," said Betsey, looking quite young and gay, and wearing a townish and unfamiliar air that upheld her words. "All ought to go that can; why, you feel's if you'd be'n all round the world. I guess I've got enough to think of and tell ye for the rest o' my days. I've always wanted to go somewheres. I wish you'd be'n there, I do so. I've talked with folks from Chiny an' the back o' Pennsylvany, and I see folks way from Australy that 'peared as well as anybody; an' I see how they made spool cotton; an' sights o' other things, an' I spoke with a doctor that lives down to the beach in the summer, an' he offered to come up 'long in the first of August, an' see what he can do for Peggy's eyesight. There was di'monds there as big as pigeon's eggs; an' I met with Mis' Abby Fletcher from South Byfleet depot—an' there was hogs there that weighed risin' thirteen hunderd——"

"I want to know," said Mrs. Lavina Dow and Peggy Bond, together.

"Well, 'twas a great exper'ence for a person," added Lavina, turning ponderously, in spite of herself, to give a last wistful look at the smiling waters of the pond.

"I don't know how soon I be goin' to settle down," proclaimed the rustic sister of Sindbad. "What's for the good o' one's for the good of all. You just wait till we're setting together up in the old shed chamber! You know, my dear Miss Katy Strafford give me a han'some present o' money that day she come to see me; and I'd be'n a dreamin' by night an' day o' seein' that Centennial, and when I come to think on't I felt sure somebody ought to go from this neighborhood, if 'twas only for the good o' the rest; and I thought I'd better be the one. I wa'n't goin' to ask the selec'men neither. I've come back with one-thirty-five in money, and I see everything there, an' I fetched ye all a little somethin'; but I'm full o' dust now, an' pretty nigh beat out. I never see a place more friendly than Pheladelphy; but 'tain't natural to a Byfleet person to be always walkin' on a level. There, now, Peggy, you take my bundle handkercher and the basket, and let Mis' Dow sag on to me. I'll git her along twice as easy."

With this the small elderly company set forth triumphant toward the Poor-house, across the wide green field.

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THE OPINIONS OF A PHILOSOPHER.

By Robert Grant.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. S. REINHART.

VI.

LITTLE FRED has been graduated from college without the loss of his front teeth or an eye. He has a few scars which will not permanently disfigure him, and though he halts slightly as the result of a strained tendon in the calf of one of his legs, Dr. Meredith assures us that this is chiefly a nervous symptom which will pass off presently. He says Fred is a little run down, and he advises raw eggs and milk between meals. I assume that the doctor is right, but it seems strange to me that a boy should get run down through foot-ball exercise. However, he is to go abroad for six months, which ought to mend matters, and then buckle down to work with Leggatt & Paine. He is an honest, manly fellow who will make friends, and, provided he does not break his neck in following the hounds or playing polo, is likely to do well.

David, my second boy, is a born chemist and a genuine book-lover besides. He is at the School of Science, to which we decided to send him instead of to college, in view of the fact that his proclivities were in the line of gases and forces rather than Greek roots and history. He is doing famously, I believe; and though I am a profound ignoramus on such matters, I should not be at all surprised if he were to make a name for himself early in life by some valuable discovery in the electrical or bacillic line. He has lately made a test of all the wall-papers and upholstery in our house, and discovered, to our dismay, that there is arsenic in pretty nearly everything, including some of the bed-sheets, which, strange to state, in spite of their innocent appearance, proved to be particularly full of the deleterious poison. We have had to overhaul everything in consequence, and Josephine firmly believes that Fred's nervous halt is due to the presence of arsenic in his system, for the bed-sheets in his college room belonged to the condemned batch. Seeing that the rest of us are perfectly well, I secretly suspect that late hours and tobacco are more to blame than arsenic for my athletic son's condition; but in the teeth of scientific warning I have not ventured to run the risk of continued exposure, and have consented to the purchase of new carpets, curtains, window-shades, and other household apparel.

I am much more concerned, to tell the truth, lest some of the germs which David is cosseting in his bed-chamber may get loose and ravage the community. He has a bacillus farm, where, according to his account, the cholera germ, the germ of tuberculosis, the typhoid-fever germ and the diphtheria germ are growing side by side for his private edification. As Josephine says, there are certain risks which a brave man has to take, but I am not sure that this is one of them. Even my darling is a little anxious on the score of contamination, in spite of her scientific son's assurance that his pets are thoroughly harmless.

I do not really know whether Josephine is prouder of Fred or of David. Certainly her mind is comparatively at rest regarding them both, notwithstanding my second boy is not quite like other people. I do not mean that he is boorish or eccentric, merely that he is bookish and self-absorbed. He takes no interest in his personal appearance, and he avoids every young woman except his sisters. Fred is dandified, keenly fond of the social interests of the day and of the other sex. I foresee that he bids fair to be a leading man of affairs, and to figure

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prominently in society, and later on to become a member of Congress or to be sent abroad as a foreign minister. But he is just like everybody else, so to

childhood the perils of idle and purely worldly living, and spurred them to make the most of themselves.

Curiously enough our two girls are

"She was surrounded by young men from the moment she entered the room."

speak; or rather he accepts the world as he finds it and accommodates himself to it. Now David is cast in a different mould. He is essentially unconventional. And yet, though his mother sighs now and then over his repugnance to young ladies, and tries to badger him into looking a little more spruce, I can perceive that she is thoroughly proud of his originality and independence, and believes that he is even more likely than his conventional brother to distinguish himself and immortalize the family name. Josephine used to say when the boys were little that she hoped one of them would be a clergyman, and I know that she has more sympathy than I—and I have considerable—with a scheme of life which entertains starving in a garret for the sake of art or science as a meritorious contingency. She has held up before her boys since their earliest

just as dissimilar to each other as Fred and David. Josie, the elder, who, as I have already specified, is, according to the world at large, the image of her mother at the same age, will not be troublesome in the least degree, so my wife tells me. She has taken to society as a duck takes to water. She has a natural aptitude for pleasing and being pleased, consequently she has plenty of partners. My wife says that, considering the dear child was all legs and arms three years ago, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves that she has turned out such a pleasant-looking girl, and that her red hair is decidedly ornamental. I call her handsome, but Josephine declares that I make myself ridiculous by the assertion, and that it is very rare that a girl who has not really a ray of beauty to commend her becomes such a thorough-going favorite in her first season.

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"She constantly reminds me of you, and that is enough for me," I remarked, tenderly, on one occasion.

"You make me boil when you say that, Fred. I was really a very pretty girl, if I do say it, whereas Josie, the sweet soul, only just escapes being homely. Her smile and her hair save her, so that she passes. But it is a libel to compare her with what I was at her age. We must look facts in the face, dear."

"People tell me every day that she is the living image of her mother," I answered, humbly.

"People are idiots. They know you will believe it because you are a man. They don't dare tell me anything of the sort. No, Fred, we must build all our hopes of beauty on Winona."

"Ah!" I remarked, with an intonation of pride, "even her mother will not be able to pick a flaw in *her*."

"She is a very handsome girl, but—" Josephine stopped short, and I could see that her lip was trembling with emotion.

"There is no 'but,'" I protested. "Whatever Josie may be, Winona is a raving beauty."

"Oh, yes, Fred, I am perfectly satisfied with her looks. That makes it all the harder. I'm on tenterhooks lest she is going to be queer."

"Queer?" I inquired, with agitation, dreading some disclosure of mental derangement.

"Odd—not like other people. It would break my heart, Fred. She is seventeen, and she doesn't take the slightest interest in coming out. You remember I had her appear for an hour at Josie's party, and that she was surrounded by young men from the moment she entered the room until I sent her to bed? Most girls would have been in danger of having their heads turned. Winona was bored."

"She will get over that as soon as she is a year older. She is shy."

"She is not shy. If she were shy I should think nothing of it. She declares that society is all nonsense, and that she wishes never to come out at all."

"What an egregiously sensible girl," I murmured.

"I hope you will not encourage her, Fred," pleaded my darling. "I have counted so much on her. If Josie had taken it into her head to be queer, I shouldn't have said a word, for I think myself that it is often for a plain girl's happiness not to have to undergo the ordeal of being neglected; but in the case of a beauty like Winona it would be such a waste! There is not a girl of her age who compares with her in beauty."

"What is it she wishes to do?" I asked, with a knitted brow. A man is apt to leave the management of his own daughters to his wife, even though he is a philosopher and prolific in theories. I had rather taken it for granted that certain advanced notions of mine regarding the conduct of women's lives would be allowed to lie dormant in my brain for lack of an animating cause, or, more accurately speaking, for lack of moral courage on my part to exploit them for the benefit of my own flesh and blood. It is more satisfactory to try experiments in the line of education on some one else's children. Besides, I had argued that Josephine was the proper person to propose a departure from the established method, in conformity with which conclusion I had paid out a handsome round sum

"She is daft on the subject of books and education."

for a coming-out party and a social wardrobe for my eldest girl. But now I felt in conscience bound to prick up my ears.

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"She doesn't know herself what she wishes to do," said my wife, dejectedly. "She is daft on the subject of books and education."

"Is not that rather to her credit?" I ventured to inquire.

Josephine gazed at me as though my words had stung her.

"Of course it is to her credit," she replied, almost fiercely. "You know perfectly well, Fred, I have encouraged the girls to study and cultivate their minds in every conceivable manner, and that I have always said they should have equal advantages in the way of education with their brothers so far as it was possible to procure them. I have just told you that if Josie had wished to be a student and to go in for a career of some kind, I should have been perfectly willing; yes, I should have been glad. But it does seem hard that they should change places, and the one who is a radiant beauty, and sure to be universally admired, should take it into her head to cut loose from society. I remember saying when she was christened that we were gambling with Divine Providence in giving her such an individualizing name, for fear she would grow up a fright. I little thought I was running the risk of such a contingency as this."

"It *is* hard, Josephine," I murmured, wishing to be sympathetic. "I think, though, you are a little premature in taking it for granted that Winona will not come round all right in the end."

My darling shook her head. "She may consent to go about in order to please me, but her heart will never be in it. Oh, I know!" she added, with another outburst, as though she were arguing with an accusing spirit, "that society is all very frivolous in theory and a waste of time, and that the moralists and people who never had the chance to go anywhere would tell me I ought to be thankful to have a daughter who cares for something besides going to balls and dinner-parties and flirting with young men. That's the way they would look at it; but they might argue until they were black in the face and they couldn't make me feel otherwise than disappointed. And what is more, I believe that Winona will be very sorry herself ten years hence if she perseveres in her present determination."

These last words were spoken by my wife almost tragically, and it was evident to me that they proceeded from the heart. I am free to confess that when Josephine gives utterance to opinions with so much earnestness as this I cannot help feeling that there must be more or less truth in them. She may be no philosopher, but she is a sensible woman. And especially in a matter where another woman, and one of her own flesh and blood, besides, is concerned, it would certainly seem as though she would be apt to be right. This whole business of the emancipation of woman is one well adapted to drive a philosopher, to say nothing of the father of a family, crazy. Naturally I wish my daughters to become all that they ought to be. On the other hand, if a paterfamilias cannot trust his better half on this particular subject, he may as well imitate the example of certain savage tribes, and make mince-meat of the girls. Perhaps I seem to be worked up on the subject? Well, I am. The din of the moralists, and of the people who have never had a chance to go anywhere, is in my ears, and I cannot get altogether rid of it. Let us start afresh and attack the question from another point of view.

There is no doubt, even to the average masculine mind, although the possessor of the mind may not publish the fact on the housetops, that the most interesting product of this enlightened century is emancipated woman. There are certain enthusiasts, though principally of the emancipated sex, who are already so confident as to the rapid future progress and ultimate glorious evolution of womankind that they are ready to venture the prediction to people whom they think they can trust, that sooner or later there will be no more men. Whether this desirable result is to be brought about by the gradual extinction or snuffing out of the hitherto sterner sex by a process of killing kindness, or by the discovery of a system of generation whereby women only will be procreated, is not

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foretold by these seers of the future; accordingly, while one might not be warranted in dismissing the theory as untenable, its fulfilment may fairly be regarded as a remote expectancy, and consigned to the consideration of real philosophers.

There is no doubt, though, that woman has been kept down for generations, and, has only just begun to bob up serenely, to hazard a colloquial metaphor. The eyes of civilization are upon her, and there is legitimate curiosity from Christiana to Yokohama to discover what she is going to do. To me as a philosopher, and taking into account one consideration with another, including Josephine's plaint, it seems as though woman would have much plainer sailing in her progress toward reconstruction if it were not that she is so exceedingly good-looking in spots and bunches. Let her distinction as an ornamental factor be totally negatived and overcome, and there is no telling how rapidly she might progress. By ornament, I mean, of course, not merely beauty of face and form, but sweetness of speech, delicacy of physique and sentiment, captivating clothes, and all those distinguishing characteristics which have tended to fasten upon the female sex the epithet of gentle. It will generally be admitted that women of homely presence, clumsy in their gait, dowdy in their dress, and raucous in their intonation, are much safer from the infliction of gallantries at the hands or lips of mortal men than those whose attributes are more pleasing; and it is safe to assert that many a male monster has been rooted to his seat in street-cars by the coldly intellectual eye of some not altogether able-bodied feminine person. The recent victories all along the line of women over men in examination-rooms, and their more or less successful ventures in the fields of law, medicine, and newspaper enterprise, would be more appalling to man and encouraging to the progressionists, but for the obstinate though obvious adhesion of the great mass of womankind to the trick bequeathed to them by their great-great-grandmothers of trying to look as well as they can. And the terrible part of it is they succeed so wonderfully that philosophers like myself are apt to find our ratiocinations wofully mixed when we try to reason about the matter.

You remember, perhaps, that Josephine induced me earlier in our wedded life to give a large party for her sister Julia? Within a year I have submitted to a similar domestic upheaval on account of my elder daughter, and I do not think that it can be said that I acquitted myself in either case malignantly, or even morosely. Indeed, though this is not strictly relevant to the discussion, my wife informed me after Josie's party was over that I had behaved like an angel. Now, my sister-in-law, Julia, is still unmarried, and she cannot be far from thirty. As I reflected at the time she came out, she is less comely than my wife and not so sagacious, but she is decidedly an attractive girl. She has had every advantage in the line of social entertainments, and every opportunity to meet available young men. She has waltzed all winter and been successively to Bar Harbor and Newport in summer. She has been to Europe so as to let people forget her and to reappear as a novelty, and she has altered the shape of her hair twice to my individual observation. Yet somehow she hangs fire. I am informed by Josephine, in strict confidence, that she has had offers and might have been married to at least one eminently desirable man before this had she seen fit to accept him; but I tell my darling that though the consciousness of what might have been may be a legitimate consolation to her and to her sister, it does not controvert the bald fact that Julia is still unmarried at the end of ten years of social divagations.

I do not mean that Julia may not marry. Very likely she will. She certainly ought to if she has the desire; and she has time enough yet if the right man only thinks so. It is rather on the system I am pondering than on the individual, though the vision of Josie at thirty unwedded, and a little hard and worn, haunts my retina and makes me feel philosophical. Away down in the bottom of my boots or my soul, or wherever a man can most safely

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harbor a secret reflection, has long lain a feeling of wonder that the world continues to put its daintiest, most cherished, and most carefully tended daughters through the peculiar social programme in vogue. Is it not bewilderingly true that every young woman of position and manners in Christendom, be her father a Knight of the Garter or a Congressman, her mother an azure-blooded countess or the ambitious better half of a retired grocer, finds on the threshold of life only one course open to her if she desires to be conventional, and to do what is naturally expected of her? From twelve to eighteen instruction—and in these latter days exemplary instruction—Latin, Greek, if there is a craving for it, history, psychology, chemistry, political economy, to say nothing of the modern languages and special courses in summer in botany, conchology, and physiology. And then, dating from a long anticipated day, or rather night, a metamorphosis startling as the transition of the cocoon; a formal letting loose of the finished maiden on the polished parquet floor of the social arena. Tra-la-la-la-la! Tra-la-la-la-la! Off she whirls to the rhythm of a Strauss waltz or a blood-stirring polka, and for the next four years, on an average, she never stops, metaphorically speaking. She may not always be waltzing or polkaing, but if she is conventionally sound she is sure to be in a whirl. She exchanges daylight for gaslight; her daily sustenance is stewed mushrooms with a rich gray gravy, beef-tea, and ice cream, varied by an occasional mouthful of fillet as a conscience composer. All winter she participates in a feverish round of balls, receptions, luncheons, dinners, teas, theatre parties, with every now and then a wedding. All summer she sails, floats, glides, sits, perches, sprawls, walks, meanders, talks, climbs, rides, saunters, or dances madly as her mood or circumstances suggest. There is her life, varying a little according to clime and disposition, according to whether she is daughter of a duke or of a successful grocer. It is what every one expects of her, so no one is surprised; and she is expected also to keep up the pace until she is married, which is likely to come to pass any day, but which, as in the case of poor Julia, may not be until she is thirty. Fancy living on mushrooms with a rich gray gravy and successively waltzing, meandering, or floating with the Tom, Dick, and Harry of the workaday social world from eighteen to thirty! And yet we fathers and philosophers ask ourselves why in thunder (or even more vehemently) our daughters have nervous prostration. Why should they? And yet I hear Josephine ask, for the discussion is uppermost in our thoughts at the moment:

"Do you wish Winona to become a second Miss Jacket?"

Let me explain that Miss Jacket, Miss Cora Jacket, M.D., lives opposite to us, and has for some months been a serious menace to the happiness of Josephine, in that my wife declares that the wretch is poisoning our Winona's mind. The charge startled me seriously when it was broached, but I have been trying to consider dispassionately whether the injury likely to be worked will be greater than that consequent upon a continuous fare of mushrooms with rich gray gravy and flirtation. Winona and Miss Cora Jacket, M.D., are certainly thicker than thieves; hence a pardonable lurking suspicion in Josephine's mind that the older woman is seeking to induce the beauty of our family to study medicine. Dr. Jacket must be thirty—just about the age of my sister-in-law. To me she appears to be a trig, energetic little woman, rather pretty and rather well dressed, and though she seems intelligent there is nothing especially frigid or forbidding in her eye. Its intellectuality is not forced upon one. I have found her so attractive that I ventured to insinuate, by way of answer to my wife's expostulation, that Winona might do much worse than model herself on Miss Cora Jacket, M.D. This drew upon my head the vial of Josephine's righteous wrath.

"Now, Fred, just stop and think for one moment," she said. "I have not a word to say against Miss Jacket. I have no doubt she is a most worthy young woman and an excellent physician, though I should never care to

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consult her myself. But that is neither here nor there. Do you happen to know what Miss Jacket's antecedents were, and what her life has been?"

I shook my head droopingly.

"She was born in Ohio, and was left an orphan, and practically unprovided for, at an early age. She was helped by kind friends—all this is from her own lips—until she was old enough to help herself by teaching, and then, by some means or other, she came East and studied medicine, and made the start for herself that you see. All of which, I beg to anticipate you in saying, is marvellously to her credit. She is plainly a brilliant and capable young woman of whom any mother might be proud, provided she had to be. But because it was creditable and sensible in Miss Jacket to make the most of herself in that particular way, you surely would not advocate that the daughters of the Princess of Wales and the Empress of Germany should do the same."

"I should certainly advocate their doing something useful," I said in my dogged fashion. "Besides, Winona is the daughter neither of the Princess of Wales nor the Empress of Germany."

"No, she is not," said Josephine, in a tone which seemed to imply that she was grateful for the escape. After all, who of us to-day would give a rush to be a king or queen? What successful business or professional man would exchange the exquisite comfort of the domestic hearth and all the magazines for the prerogatives of royalty? I understood perfectly what Josephine wished to express, and agreed with her on the point. Her daughters, save for a little pomp and circumstance, were practically the peers of any and all princesses.

"Just consider, for a moment, Winona and Miss Jacket side by side," Josephine continued. "Don't you see any difference between them?"

"Well, of course Winona is an unusually handsome girl," I murmured. "Besides, she is younger."

"Younger!" groaned Josephine, evidently believing me hopeless. "Do you really, seriously think, Fred, that they are to be mentioned in the same breath as ladies?"

I rather think I looked foolish and twiddled my fingers.

"If," said Josephine, with an emphasis on the conjunction, and repeating it still more emphatically, "if it were necessary I would not say a word. If Winona were one of seven girls, I should be sorry, but I would not say a word. If it had been Josie, I should have been rather pleased — which shows, Fred, that I am not altogether hostile to the spirit of the age. But I am not prepared as yet to see my only really handsome daughter—and such a handsome one, Fred—fly in the face of convention and custom merely—merely to please Miss Jacket and the people who never have a chance to go anywhere."

All Josephine's combativeness and pride of opinion seemed to ooze suddenly away, and she buried her face on my shoulder, murmuring—

"Oh, yes, the whole system of society for girls is ridiculous and degenerating. I know it, I know it perfectly well. I don't approve of it, I never have approved of it. I wonder that so many come out of it as well as they do. And they are not content as in my day to be merely giddy; they go in now for smoking cigarettes and drinking liqueurs after dinner, and some of them paint their faces. Not all of them, of course, not one-tenth of them; Josie will never do anything of the kind. I ought, though, to be thankful, heartily thankful, if Winona prefers to stay away from all this and to develop worthy tastes of her own. She shall do what she pleases, Fred, only——"

My darling stopped short as though she had concluded not to complete her sentence. She gulped bravely and lifted her eyes to mine.

"Kiss me, dear," she whispered. "I am not really so worldly as you think."

"You are an angel, and will never be anything else to me," I responded, stroking her hair.

She lay still for a moment, happy but pensive. "She shall do whatever she pleases; only it is a very much easier matter for you to be virtuous and to say, 'Let her study medicine,' than for me."

"I have not said so, dearest."

"You have thought so, though. You

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do not need to speak to have me know when you are thinking things. No man can possibly conceive what it means to a mother to have a daughter a radiant beauty and peculiar."

"I dare say not," I murmured, humbly.

"Especially," she continued, reflectively, "when you consider that, though society is foolish, there is really nothing else at present to take its place to give a girl what nothing else is likely to give her—I do not say nothing else can give it to her, but nothing else is in the least likely to; and when you consider the vast number of wives and mothers who have been through it all when they were young, and are charming and—yes, Fred, sensible, intelligent women to-day. I don't pretend that I myself am half what I might have been, but I went through it all as a girl without becoming absolutely vapid and volatile. Didn't I, dear?"

"You certainly did, Josephine. If Winona turns out your equal I shall be more than satisfied."

"Thank you, dear, but you mustn't say it. I do wish her to have more mind. My mind was more or less neglected; but, on the other hand, Fred, I never had the opportunity to be peculiar, for there was no chance to be in those days. Now the disease is liable to break out in any family. All we can do, Fred, is to remember that we are growing old, and to trust that the world of to-day is wiser than we."

"Amen!" I murmured.

And yet the consciousness that Josephine passed through it all and is what she is, makes me feel a little doubtful still on the score of the new dispensation, in spite of the mushrooms with rich gray gravy.

VII.

My daughter Winona has become a Christian Scientist, and Josephine says I have only myself to blame in that I encouraged her to model herself upon Miss Jacket. This strikes me as a little harsh, seeing that Miss Jacket, M.D., is a regular practitioner in the allopathic line, whereas Winona declares that the science of medicine is all nonsense, for the excellent reason that there is no such thing as disease. When I used this argument as a defence, Josephine regarded me scornfully, and remarked that the pair were practically one in ideas, and that it was futile of me to split straws on such a point. Ye gods and little fishes! Is it, forsooth, splitting straws to maintain that there can be no sympathy of soul between a woman doctor who takes you at your word and administers castor-oil to cure your stomach-ache and one who elevates her nose and vows that you haven't one?"

"You can't make fish of one and flesh of another," continued my wife, majestically. "The mischief was done when they walked arm-in-arm for weeks together while they were becoming intimate. It makes little difference, it seems to me, as to the precise nature of the development. If Winona hadn't embraced (as she calls it) Christian Science, she would in all probability have worn bloomers, in which case I should not have held Dr. Cora Jacket guiltless merely because that young woman continued to wear petticoats. Neither do I in the present emergency. Who was it introduced Winona to Mrs. Titus, I should like to know?"

"Was Miss Jacket responsible for that?" I inquired, respectfully, not venturing to contest further the soundness of my wife's logic in her present excited frame of mind.

"She was indeed, and it is very little consolation to me that she professes to be sorry for it now." Josephine tapped her foot with a worried air, which found voice presently in a laugh born of sheer desperation. "Isn't it perfectly ludicrous, Fred? Do you realize what the child wishes to do?"

"I understood you to state that she wishes to enter upon a crusade to show that all our aches and pains are hallucinations. There ought to be a fortune in that, my dear, compared with which the profits from David's electrical discovery will pale into insignificance."

"This is no laughing matter, Fred. She is intensely in earnest; her heart is set upon the plan, and there is no use in arguing with her. She simply looks calm and tells you that you don't know."

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I scratched my head and pondered. My younger daughter's plan, as it had been unfolded to me, was this: She proposed to set up as a practitioner of Christian Science in partnership with another young woman of the same faith. They were to cure disease apparently by dint of assuring their patients that because there is no such thing as matter, nothing could be the matter with anyone. Their instructress, Mrs. Titus, had demonstrated the truth of this theory by a varied line of cures, and they had been encouraged by her to go on with the good work. Had I any objection to the scheme?

"Perhaps I had better talk the matter over with her and try to bring her to her senses," I remarked.

"I wish you joy of the experience," said my wife, with a wry smile. "She is like a seraph in her serenity, and I might just as well have been talking to a stone wall for all the effect my words seemed to have. Of course you can prevent her; she understands that; but I should like to see you alter her opinion."

I concluded to try. Accordingly, I summoned Winona to the library that evening, and we were closeted with folded doors, as the phrase is, for an hour and a half. Being a father I was desirous naturally to be judicious and yet sympathetic; being a philosopher I was willing to be enlightened if I was ignorant. My son David had demonstrated to me that a young germ of tuberculosis has all the engaging attractiveness of a six-months' old baby; perhaps it had been reserved for my daughter to prove to me that I had never had constitutional headaches. If so, what an amount of unnecessary misery I had undergone from sheer lack of knowledge!

Conventional conceptions are slow to relax their grip even when one's reason is prepared to discard them as outworn. I am not giving utterance in this sententious fashion to distrust in allopathy; I simply am thinking of the qualms which persisted in harrowing my soul as I gazed upon my very beautiful daughter, and tried to feel proud that she was endeavoring to do something useful. My associations with lovely women are so intimately associated with the ball-room floor and the purlieus of polite society, that, in spite of my secret sympathy with the progress of the sex, I could not completely school my mental machinery so as to exclude a lurking regret that such arrant good looks were to be wasted upon people who had nothing the matter with them, and who would, perhaps, be slow in recognizing the fact. I was even weak enough to remark:

"Winona, my dear, you look this evening handsome enough to eat."

As Christian Scientists are said to harbor the belief that, owing to the non-existence of matter, looks of any kind are a delusion and snare, for the reason that individuals do not really exist, but are merely so many reflections of the one eternal and immutable existence, just as the various reflections in a stream are often but the continuous duplication of some single incandescent jet, it was scarcely to be expected that my darling daughter would fall a victim to the lure which I held out to her. She had the goodness to smile a ghost of a smile, but it was evident that the speech interested her very little. Before settling down to the business in hand I could not help, however, saying to myself that, if I were a young man, I should fall down and worship before this particular shrine, Christian Science and delusion to the contrary notwithstanding. Then I said, with as much cheer as I could muster:

"And so you wish to practise medicine, Winona?"

"Not medicine, father. It is Christian Science."

"Excuse me. But are not Christian Scientists doctors?"

"We do not give medicine."

"But you cure sick people?"

Winona shook her head and smiled sweetly. "There are no sick people," she said, with quiet decision.

"Then why are there so many physicians?"

"If people had the requisite faith, there would be no more physicians."

"Only Christian Scientists."

My daughter looked at me no less sweetly because of my taunt, and responded:

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"In time we shall all be able to heal ourselves. It is simply a question of strength and degree. Some of us have more power than others at present, but as the world grows the number of those sufficient unto themselves will increase."

"What makes you think so?"

"I know it, father."

"From Mrs. Titus?"

"Mrs. Titus knows it too; but I know it not merely because she knows it, but because I can feel that it is so."

"But, my dear child, surely you do not mean to tell me that if I were to have typhoid fever, I shouldn't have it."

"I know that you would think you had it."

"Well, supposing I died, wouldn't I be dead?"

Winona hesitated for an instant, but it was only in order to avoid committing herself to one heresy while seeking to avoid another. "You would be dead, though perhaps not as we now understand being dead. You would not have died of typhoid fever, but of the belief that you were suffering from typhoid fever induced by the hallucination of error."

"I see," I answered, though to tell the truth I did not, and it was very evident to me that Winona thought so too, for her serene smile revealed just a tinge of amusement. Even a real philosopher would be apt to feel nettled were he to suspect that he was making himself ridiculous in the eyes of his most beautiful daughter. I said a little sternly:

"I wish you would explain to me in the first place what you mean by saying that I might not be dead as we now understand being dead."

Winona folded her hands. "I said that, father, because we Christian Scientists are not yet certain as to what is the precise nature of death. There are some who deem death also an hallucination, and the apparent annihilation of matter consequent upon it merely a reflex confirmation of the truth that there is no matter, only spirit; and it may well be that as the world grows in faith, death will disappear in that we shall cease to think we see matter. Mrs. Titus holds this view, but I am not yet sufficiently free from error to be sure that I believe it."

"And so you wish to practise medicine, Winona?"

"But you are sure you believe that I should not have typhoid fever?"

"Perfectly."

"But what if the doctors said I had?"

"They would be mistaken, father."

I stroked my chin in order to bridle my tongue. "How old are you, Winona?" I asked.

"Just eighteen, father."

"You have never studied medicine, I believe?"

"No."

"Nor had any special advantages or opportunities to investigate the nature of disease?"

"Only through Mrs. Titus."

"Precisely. And yet you are willing to call yourself wiser than the men who have devoted their lives to its study—the physicians of London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, to say nothing of those of New York and Boston."

A faint flush overspread Winona's face. "The doctors have been mistaken many times before, father. You remember Harvey and the circulation

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of the blood. The doctors laughed at him at first."

"But Harvey was a trained student of medicine; you are a school-girl."

"Mrs. Titus is not a school-girl."

"Has she ever studied medicine?"

"I think not. But as disease is simply human error, we consider the study of medicine a waste of time. Our faith teaches us that everything which doctors call illness is merely a clouding of truth in the soul by error."

"And how do you cure your patients who suffer from the error of typhoid fever?"

"By the restoration of truth and their faith in truth."

"By what active means? What do you do?"

"We think of them. We bring our minds to bear upon the error in their minds."

"Is that all?"

"It is sufficient, father. Mrs. Titus has effected wonderful cures by this means only."

"Does she cure all her patients?"

"When she does not cure them, it is because error has blinded them to the perception of truth. If all could perceive truth, there would be no more error; and, as it is, there are many who cannot perceive as yet even faintly."

"And this is all?"

"Yes, provided you understand."

"I understand the fundamental truth to be that matter does not exist."

"It does not."

"So that even our bodies are a sham."

"We believe that our bodies exist, but they do not really."

"Then why do you believe it?"

"I do not believe it, but I am not yet conscious that my body does not exist. I hope to be some day, yet very likely I shall never be. Mrs. Titus is conscious of the truth at times."

"Why do you say 'at times?'"

"Because she is still somewhat sensitive to the error of heat and cold. She considers this a weakness, and she is willing to admit that she is not wholly free from error. You see Mrs. Titus is a perfectly reasonable woman, father. I am sure you would think so, if you could hear her talk. I heard her questioned the other day on that very point of susceptibility to cold. Some one asked—and asked in a scoffing spirit, father—'Supposing you were to go out-doors, Mrs. Titus, with nothing on, when the thermometer was below zero, should you feel cold?' Her answer was: 'I fear I should, though I ought not to. It is possible that after a while I might be proof against the weakness, but in all probability I should never be able to overcome it. It is simply a question of time though, when Christian Science is able to subdue this error.' Was that not unassumingly and beautifully put, father?"

"Quite unlike the brutal dogmatism of the regular practitioner, who would be apt to recommend a strait-jacket for the individual who should venture to brave the rigor of our New England climate without a stitch of clothing."

Although I spoke with a sober and sympathetic mien, my beautiful daughter plainly distrusted the sincerity of my words. Her great brown eyes regarded me mournfully, and it seemed to me there was pity in them—pity for her poor benighted parent. She said, sweetly and softly:

"You must not make sport of Christian Science, father. It has done a great deal of good already. Besides, Mrs. Titus did not do anything of the kind. There is nothing in the least sensational about her."

"And you wish to follow in her footsteps, my dear?"

"I should like to try to."

"And what if I should forbid you to do anything of the sort?"

Winona's cheek flushed and her eyes dropped a little in the face of my appearance of sternness, but she answered with the same ineffable sweetness, as though she were seeking to impress upon me that persecution could not ruffle the temper of one of her faith. "I should have to give up the plan, of course. But," she murmured, "I should still be a Christian Scientist. I could not help being one, you know."

If you ask me why I did not remand her to afternoon teas and the mantua-makers, or advise her to allay her skipping spirit with some cold drops of philanthropy, I fear that I could not give

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a very satisfactory explanation. I am not, and I never shall be, a Christian Scientist, notwithstanding my beauty of a daughter declares that she can cure the proletariat of coughs, colics, and fevers simply by thinking about them. It was Josephine, not I, who remarked, after the matter was settled, and Winona had begun to keep office hours, that on the whole it was less dreadful than if she had become an actress or joined a settlement of the Toynbee Hall variety, for the reason that she still remained at home, and we had not wholly lost our hold upon her. Evidently Josephine regards her behavior as a passing phase which will sooner or later wear off and leave her more like other people, and she considers the actual practice of Christian Science rather less demoralizing from a conventional point of view than some other forms of revolt. I can see what she means. However honorable her intentions, a woman who has knocked about on the stage for half a dozen years is likely to have her perspective of life enlarged to such an extent that she can behold without winking many things which are carefully hidden from the general run of the sex, and the consequence is that she is apt to refuse to wear blinders for the rest of her existence. So too, it can be safely predicated that continuous exalted fellowship with the dregs of the population on the part of women weaned from the lap of luxury, and a consequent sacrifice of almost every form of creature comfort barring a tooth-brush, a small piano, a few books, and an etching or two, will be likely to create a sterner and sterner disrelish for the ice-cream and mushrooms vista of life at the end of which stands a husband with a newly furnished house and an ample income. My wife is ready to admit that purely from the point of view of common sense she would have preferred to have the child do almost anything peculiar rather than engage in her present mummery, because some people will consider her crazy; but, on the other hand, she maintains that the chances of losing her altogether are much less serious than if she had become a Toynbee Haller, for instance. "Mind you," said Josephine, "however much I might have fumed, I should really have been very, very proud if she had gone in for that. I can imagine, if you once got used to the idea, feeling quite as happy over it as if one's son had become a clergyman, which of course," she added, meditatively, "is a peculiar kind of happiness not just like any other. But it would have meant separation forever, to all intents and purposes, for I am too old to change my interests now, however much I may disapprove of them in theory, and though I should very likely go in for something of the same kind in case I were to begin life over again. But I don't feel as though this Christian Science were more than a temporary craze; and being just the ordinary everyday woman I am, I cannot help welcoming the possibility that Winona in course of time will come to her senses. It may be selfish of me, but I can't help it."

Now I do not regard the matter from quite such a personal point of view as Josephine, though I agree with her that I should not have picked out Christian Science as the most desirable loop-hole of escape from the trammels of convention. To be sure, as Josephine says, it is her loss rather than mine, for a father is much less completely estranged from a daughter who is peculiar than is a mother, in that the bond of clothes and parties and all the hitherto traditional tastes of woman does not exist between a father and daughter. Hence it is probably much easier for me to look at the matter philosophically than it is for Josephine. Accordingly, though I laugh in my sleeve at the solemn pretensions of my dear deluded daughter, and am more or less uncomfortable in consequence of my consciousness that all the sensible people of my acquaintance are laughing at her also, I am inclined to watch her progress with a sympathy which includes the hope that she will work out of her present state of lunacy into a more practical field, rather than that she will relapse into the stereotyped woman whom we all know. When, however, Josephine asked me the other day to specify the field, I was obliged to admit that my ideas were a trifle hazy. My state of mind doubt-

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less proceeds from a rooted conviction that the emancipation of woman has only just begun, and a certain sympathetic curiosity with her each and every effort to advance. To realize her progress I have only to glance up at my ancestor with the mended eye and consider what a doll and a toy she was to him. Then I look at my wife, who was brought up on the old system, and say to myself that, unless, indeed, man is to be utterly snuffed out and extinguished, there are certain feminine characteristics in the preservation of which he is deeply interested, even when, like myself, he is at heart an aider and abettor of emancipation. No more gingerbread education, no more treatment as dolls and nincompoops, no more discrimination between one sex and the other as to knowledge of this world's wickedness, no more curtailment of personal liberty on the score of that bugaboo, propriety—all these if you like, ladies; but we men, we fathers and philosophers, ask that you retain, for our sakes, beauty of face and form, beauty of raiment, low, modulated voices, and a graceful carriage, faith, hope, and charity, even though you continue to reveal these last-named as at present with sweet, illogical inconsequence. More than this, we cannot do without the tender devotion, the unselfish forethought, the aspiring faith, which, even though we seem to mock and to be blind, saves us from the world and from ourselves. If you are to become merely men in petticoats, what will become of us? We shall go down, down, down, like the leaden plummet cast into the depths of the sea. We shall be snuffed out and extinguished in sober truth. Hence, certain that the work of emancipation is to continue, my philosophical glance follows fondly and almost proudly the course of my second daughter, who is making a fool of herself at the moment by practising Christian Science, because she has beauty and grace and a knowledge of the value of colors, purity and tenderness and aspiring faith, as her mother had before her, while at the same time she has forsaken the beaten path of convention and turned her brow to the morning. All of which Josephine informs me is charming reasoning provided Winona does not fall in love with somebody. I do not understand the precise logic of this criticism, but, on the other hand, Josephine is very apt to know what she is talking about.

VIII.

I CAME home one afternoon with a puckered brow.

"Has the Supreme Court decided another case against you?" asked Josephine, with solicitude.

I shook my head and answered, wearily: "Worse than that."

My wife regarded me in anxious silence, while manifestly she was cudgelling her brains to divine what could have happened. As she told me afterward, she imagined from my doleful air that I must at least have a seed in my little sac.

"They have asked me to run for Congress in this district," I finally vouchsafed to state.

Josephine dropped her fancy-work and sat upright with an air of satisfaction which was wholly out of keeping with my own dejected mien.

"Really, Fred! Who has asked you? The governor?"

"The governor does not usually go round on his bended knees asking candidates to run for Congress," I answered, with mild sarcasm.

"Well, the mayor then?"

I have labored for years to make plain to Josephine the ramifications of our National, State, and Municipal Government, but just as I am beginning to think that she understands the matter tolerably well, she is sure to break out in some such hopeless fashion as this, which shows that her conceptions are still crookeder than a ram's horn. And the strangest part is, that she can tell you all about the English Parliament and Home Rule, and whether any given Statesman is a Liberal or a Liberal Unionist, and about M. Clemenceau and the relative strength of the Bonapartists and Orleans factions. But when it comes to distinguishing clearly between an Alderman

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and a State Senator, or a Member of Congress and a Member of the Legislature she is apt to get exasperatingly muddled. I asked her once in my most impressive manner why it was that she did not take a more vital interest in the politics of her native country, and after reflecting a moment she told me that she thought it must be because they were so stupid. On the other hand, with apparent inconsistency she has many times expressed the hope that I would some day be conspicuously connected with them. I have been conscious for some time that it would suit her admirably to have me round off my professional career as Speaker of the National House of Representatives or Minister to the Court of St. James.

"Josephine," I said, in a tone of despair, "have I not explained to you time and time again that Members of Congress are the Representatives from the several States who are sent to Washington? How could the governor, who is a State officer, or the mayor, who is a municipal officer, have anything to do with the nomination of a Member of the National House of Representatives? Only think, dear, what you are saying."

Probably Josephine would have evinced more contrition in tribute to this harangue had not her ears been fascinated by my reference to the Capital of our country.

"It *was* stupid of me, Fred. Do you mean to tell me, dear, they are going to send you to Washington? That would be perfectly delightful."

"I merely have been asked to accept the nomination for Congress in the Fourth District," I answered, dryly.

"And what did you tell them?"

"I said I would think it over."

"You must accept. Of course you will accept? It would be splendid, Fred. I would a great deal rather have you in Congress than go on our trip to Japan. I have often thought I should like to pass a winter in Washington."

By dint of economy and some shrewd investments I had managed to save up a vacation fund of more than normal size, by means of which Josephine and I were proposing to enjoy a jaunt to Japan. We had been looking forward to this excursion, which I felt that we had fairly earned by strict devotion to home and business ties for a long period of years.

"The District is hopelessly Republican in the first place, my dear, and I, as you know, am a Democrat."

Josephine looked grave for a moment. "But a great many Republicans would vote for you, Fred. Oh, I am sure they would!" she added, eagerly, impressed by the plausibility of the idea. "Harry Bolles is a Republican, and I am certain he would vote for you; so would Dr. Meredith and Sam Bangs."

"They are three out of several thousand voters in the district, Josephine. You argue like the committee which waited upon me."

"They said a great many Republicans would vote for you, didn't they? And they thought you would be elected?"

"They were kind enough to state that I had a good fighting chance, which means, my dear, that I haven't the ghost of a show."

Josephine regarded me a moment distrustfully. "It doesn't seem to me there is any use in being too modest about such a matter as this, Fred. Somebody has to be elected, and it might as well be you as anybody. I have always hoped you would go into politics, you know. If they hadn't wanted you they wouldn't have asked you."

"The only certain thing about it is, that if they had supposed I could possibly be elected, they wouldn't have offered me the nomination."

"What do you mean, Fred? I call that mock modesty, darling."

I did not consider that I was called upon to unfold more particularly to my wife the cynical estimate of the case which I entertained in my secret soul, especially in view of the fact that the committee which had waited upon me comprised not merely politicians but some of our best citizens. Although a man who is invited to run for Congress in a district hopelessly hostile is likely to cherish secret suspicions as to the

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sincerity of those who offer him the nomination, the bait of self-sacrifice for the public good has lured many a cleverer man than I to his destruction. Besides, a fighting chance invariably seems more prodigious to the one who is said to have it, than to anyone else. There were certainly weak joints in the armor (an analogy supplied me by the committee) of my opponent, who was a dyed-in-the-wool politician, and indisputably I had a great many friends. Could I afford to disregard the piteous, eloquent argument of the spokesman, Honorable David Flint, that the sacred cause of Reform demanded me as its champion, and that victory was possible only under my banner? I had promised to think it over, which was a coy way of stating that I would accept. Having made up my mind to run, I was obliged to tell Josephine that this would mean good-by for many a long and weary month to our jaunt.

"If you're elected, Fred, I shall be only too glad to postpone it. And if by any chance you don't get in, we'll forget all about it in dear Japan."

"You do not quite understand the situation, pet. We stay at home in any case, election or no election. The expenses will eat up my savings for a rainy day in Japan. I shall have to contribute handsomely to everybody and everything. It's an outrage, but one of the painful results of having greatness thrust upon one."

Thereupon Josephine flung her arms around my neck and informed me that I was not only a dear, noble hero, but that Japan or no Japan she would not begrudge one copper of any sum I might be obliged to spend in order to defeat that odious wretch, Mr. Daniel Spinney. A few days later, after my letter of acceptance was published, she said that she did not see how anyone who had the least respect for the sacred right of suffrage could hesitate between us.

"Spinney is not such a bad fellow at bottom," I replied, albeit touched by the warm partisanship of my wife.

"Didn't I read in the newspaper this morning, that he is a notorious spoilsman?"

"Very likely, dear. Spinney has always called Civil Service Reform a humbug."

"And he is all wrong on the tariff."

"We think so."

"Well, then, how can you say that he isn't a bad fellow at bottom?"

"I mean, Josephine, that apart from politics he is a very decent sort of person. I couldn't help thinking while I was chatting with him yesterday that there was something quite attractive about him. He isn't exactly the kind of man I should hold up as a model to my sons, but, as I said before, he is by no means a bad fellow."

Josephine had been looking at me aghast ever since the opening sentence of this speech. "You don't mean to tell me, Fred, that you stopped and chatted with that wretch?"

"Indeed I do. We happened to meet, and so we hobnobbed for five minutes on the street corner and drew each other out in the friendliest sort of fashion as to our mutual prospects. He says he has a walk-over, and I told him that he isn't in it."

"I'm glad you showed a little spirit, anyhow."

"What would you have had me do? Make a fell assault upon his hair and eyeballs? As it was, I perpetrated a deliberate falsehood in the good cause. He knows that I know I am beaten from the start."

"Nonsense," said Josephine. "You provoke me, Fred, when you talk in that fashion. What was the use of accepting if you didn't intend to win if you could?"

"So I do intend, but I can't."

"You can't certainly if you hobnob with the rival candidate and call him a good fellow."

"You ought to have been a politician, Josephine."

"No, I'm only crazy to have you win, Fred, and I'm convinced you can win if you only think so yourself and pitch in as if you thought so. I daresay Mr. Spinney may be well enough apart from politics, but it is politics we are interested in at present, and it seems to me it is your duty to hate him—until the election is over anyway. If you defeat him, you may ask him to dinner if you like."

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Her eyes sparkled like diamonds, and there was a dangerous look in them which would have boded ill for Mr. Spinney or any other Republican had he happened to thrust his head inside our doors just then. As for me, I felt a little sheepish at my lack of courage, I must confess, and I cried with genuine ardor: "Hurrah for Reform! You're right, my dear," I added, "I must pitch in. I haven't been quite so pusillanimous, however, as it would seem, for I have got Nick Long to superintend my campaign."

You may remember that Nicholas Long, or Nick Long, as we always speak of him, has never stood high in Josephine's good graces on account of his unorthodox habits regarding church-going. He has an unpleasant way of encountering us on our way to the sanctuary in the toggery of a man who is going to take a day off in the country. He has, however, a cool, analytical mind, and his name has been associated for some years with reform politics. In obtaining his services as a manager I felt that I had done well and wisely. Josephine looked a little sober, as though she was not altogether gratified at my selection, but realizing, very likely on second thought, that the children's habits were formed, she contented herself by remarking:

"I shall keep my eye upon him and make sure that he doesn't get you into any mischief."

"You seem to forget," I said, "that he is a leading reformer."

Josephine smiled incredulously. "Fred," she continued presently with a pensive air, "I wish it were the custom here, as it is in England, for a candidate's wife to go about and buttonhole people and beg votes and kiss babies for him, and all that sort of thing. I'm not so young as I was, I know, but I daresay I should appear quite as well as Mrs. Daniel Spinney, whoever she may be. I really think I could make a fairly respectable speech just on the strength of my conjugal devotion and righteous indignation against that villain of a man. 'Ahem: Fellow Democrats, I beseech you in the name of common sense and decency, in the name of the Goddess of Liberty, and of good government and order, and as you love your cradles and your firesides, not to vote for that dyed-in-the-wool Republican and spoilsman, Daniel Spinney, but to vote early and often for that talented, noble, self-sacrificing, upright citizen and Democrat, Frederick——'"

"*E pluribus unum!* Let her go Gallagher! Erin go bragh! rah! rah! rah! Harvard!" I cried, as I seized the lovely orator in my arms and hugged her to my breast, thereby, to adopt her own words, squeezing out of her the little breath which she had left. "Bravo, Josephine! If you were to take the stump it would be I and not Mr. Spinney who would have a walk-over."

"At any rate, Fred," she continued, after she had regained her breath and recomposed her ruffled hair, "I can put in a word to help you here and there among our friends. It was on the tip of my tongue yesterday to call Rev. Bradley Mason's attention to the fact that you were a candidate in the hope that he might make just a slight allusion to it from the pulpit. Not directly by name, of course; he couldn't do that very well; but he might speak of the importance of aiding those who were battling for the noble cause of pure government, so that people could guess what he meant. I didn't do it," she added, a little ruefully, "because I was afraid you might possibly not like it, and there was plenty of time in which to give him the hint."

"Thank goodness you didn't say a word on the subject," I answered. "It wouldn't have done at all."

For the next six weeks our house was a veritable bureau of political activity. Although Josephine lived up to her threat of keeping an eye on Nicholas Long, she admitted before many days had passed that he was what my boys call a thorough-going hustler, and that he was determined to leave no portion of my Congressional acreage unsown with Democratic seed. This farming metaphor was borrowed from Nick, who had many others at his command suited to the various classes of constituents he wished to reach. His brain fairly buzzed with fertile expedients devised to catch this and that portion of the popular vote. He was a

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great believer in documents. As he expressed it, the territory must be plastered with statistics and other printed matter, which were much more serviceable nowadays than in the past. He said that formerly the average voter flung everything into the waste-basket and went to the polls simply on the strength of party prejudice fortified by the glamour of a torchlight procession, but that now he read and thought, and refused to support the party candidate merely because he was the party candidate. He deluged the community with

I appeared on the door-steps and delivered a few halting sentences.

copies of my letter of acceptance, and three days later overwhelmed the postal service with a batch of circulars embodying a short, pithy description of my personal virtues and talents, interwoven with sound doctrine. Although he confided to me that torchlight organizations were moribund factors in political warfare, he advised me to supply uniforms and torches, and a promise of abundant cigars, ice-cream and ginger-beer for the cementation of a band of youthful warriors eager to call themselves the "Fourth District Reform Cadets." "There is not more than one voter in twenty among them," said Nick, "but it will please their fathers, and do no harm in any event, especially as your wife and I have devised a costume for them that will drive the Spinney Guards under cover with jealousy."

The costume in question was a pattern of garish ingenuity: white bearskin caps with red, white, and blue pompons; bright blue blouses dashed with white, and white leather belts, and red zouave knickerbockers. Their torches were encased in fantastic glass lanterns alternately red, white, and blue. On the occasion of their first parade, when they drew up before the house to receive their transparency adorned on one side with a villainous portrait of myself superscribed by the motto, "Our Fathers Fought For Freedom, We Are Fighting For The Right," and on the other a cut depicting the rival candidate up to his armpits in the bog of Civil Service Reform, described as "Spinney's Walk-Over" (a happy blending, as Nick called it, of serious principle and humorous suggestion), I appeared on the door-steps and delivered a few halting sentences of gratitude and augury for success, which were received with loud plaudits and the rattle of the drum corps. Thereupon I invited the battalion to enter and partake of a little simple hospitality, which they hastened to do to the number of two hundred, including a dozen ward heelers in citizens' raiment, and three or four nondescripts whom nobody knew, but whom Nick said it would be impolitic to offend by exclusion. A hearty supper was ready for them in the dining-room, presided over by Josephine and her daughters, whose presence seemed at first to abash my warriors of the torch. But only for a few moments. Realizing presently that these Goddesses had apparently but one aim in life, to wit, to help them to salad, oysters, and ice-cream, diffidence disappeared like fog before the morning sun, and with it the viands down the throats of my red, white, and blue supporters. In the liquid line Josephine gave a choice of hot coffee and chocolate, thereby joining issue for the first time with my manager on the subject of methods. Nick was in favor of champagne, on the score that the Spinney Guards had

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been regaled with beer and sherry, but my darling declared that even if it were the turning-point of the election, she would not consent to win votes by playing Hebe to beardless youths. A political aspirant who is forced to decide between his manager and his wife has need of all the philosophy at his command.

To atone for this obduracy, Josephine had a pleasant little surprise ready in the shape of a basket of silken badges emblematic chiefly of myself, and more remotely of the Presidential candidate and our party principles. She and her daughters, despite my blushes, fastened these one by one to the blue blouses of the members of the Fourth District Reform Cadets after everything to eat and drink in the house had vanished. Not only then, but henceforth until the end of the campaign, it was embarrassing to me to note how subordinate a position every other candidate held in Josephine's regard. One would have supposed that I was the party nominee for the chief magistracy of the nation, instead of the leader of a forlorn contest for a congressional seat in a hopelessly Republican district. On the occasion of the torchlight parade two miles long, whereby the enemy sought to carry the city by storm, and which passed close to our front door, our house was as dark as Erebus. Josephine insisted even that the lights in the front hall and in the basement should be extinguished, and she drew the drawing-room curtains over the window-shades so that we need not seem to furnish our foes with one pale ray of comfort. Induced by curiosity to peep out at the passing show, she limited her strictures to scornful but tranquil denunciation of the campaign rhetoric blazoned on the transparencies, until the Spinney Guards arrived, headed by a magnificent mulatto bearing a delineation of the Reform Candidate submerged in a huge soup-tureen with an appropriate tag beneath. For an instant she stared, then she gasped as though some one had struck her, and she fiercely started to raise the window.

"What are you trying to do, Josephine?"

"Let me go, Fred. I will, I will. How dare they?"

"Pooh, dear! All is fair in politics. It's no worse than the Swamp of Civil Service Reform," I said, as I tore away her vindictive grasp from the window which she had succeeded in opening a foot or two, and shut it hastily.

"How dare they? You had no right to prevent me from hissing, Fred. I should like to fling something at them too. It's an outrage making you look like that, and—and in the soup, too."

Not all the enthusiasm generated by our rival procession, which took place forty-eight hours later, nor indeed the long flattering list of my supporters published by Nick Long in the newspapers for two days prior to election day, sufficed entirely to obliterate from Josephine's soul the bitterness of this insult. As she expressed it, was it not cruel to flaunt such a thing in the faces of children who had been used to think of their father as the most dignified of men, one with whose personality no one would dare to tamper or trifle? It nerved her, however, to more desperate efforts in my behalf. She ventured even on holding up our beloved pastor, the Rev. Bradley Mason, in the street, and capturing his signature to the list of leading citizens who supported me. This ought, she declared, to outweigh sixty soup-tureens.

The Reform Candidate submerged in a huge soup-tureen.

Before the votes were counted I knew

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well enough that I had been defeated, but for Josephine's dear sake I allowed her to prepare a victor's banquet on the assumption that my friends would be pouring in upon me with congratulations. It was she who drove me from my evening paper, to which I was settling down like a philosopher after dinner, to go to my headquarters and ascertain the result. She was sure I was elected. If not (and here her voice melted) the people were not fit to have such a pearl offered to them. I went, and it was half-past ten when I returned. She heard my step, and rushed down to meet me at the front door. I was calm and smiling.

"Defeated by one hundred and fourteen votes, dear. A close fight, wasn't it?"

"Ah, Fred, defeated! You poor, poor boy."

"I can stand it if you can, Josephine," I answered, as with my arm wound around her waist I led her into the dining-room, where the stalled ox and truffled turkey and a glittering array of glass confronted us.

"It was that horrid soup-tureen did it, I am convinced," she murmured, sitting down beside me on the sofa.

"Nonsense, dear. Everyone says I got a wonderful vote against such odds. They are talking about it downtown as though I had won a victory. Nick is called a great manager."

"But that Spinney is elected all the same," she said, dejectedly.

"Yes he is, Josephine. We can't escape from that. I tell you what, I'm going to have a glass of champagne," I said, entering the china closet and taking possession of one of the bottles which had been packed in ice for the refreshment of my friends. I filled a glass for each of us and drained mine to the philosophical toast, "Here's to peace and a quiet life, my dear."

"It would have been very nice to have gone to Washington," said Josephine between her sips. "It might have been a stepping-stone to higher things. You know you would have been pleased to be sent abroad as a foreign minister. It would have just suited you, Fred."

"It may be that the President, when he hears of the gallant fight I made, will reward me with something in that line," I answered, with a twinkle in my eye. "By the way, what egotists we are! I did not tell you, and you did not inquire, who had been elected President. We have won a glorious victory."

"I'm very glad, I'm sure," said Josephine, in a tone which was scandalously absent-minded considering the importance of the information. After a moment she remarked, coyly: "I should really think, Fred, there might be a chance of his giving you something when he hears."

"Not the slightest, you dear woman. I was only teasing you. I am a very humble figure in the politics of the country, I assure you, and even if the President is aware of my existence when he enters office, it will never occur to him to pick me out for preferment. Besides, I don't wish anything. I am perfectly content to sink back into the obscurity from which I was lured by the call of duty. It would have tickled my pride a little to have defeated Spinney, but I am inclined to think I should have found it rather a bore to have been only one Congressman among so many."

"Just think of it, one hundred and fifteen more votes would have given you the election. It seems hard to have missed it by so little. You mustn't think me a goose about you, Fred," she added, after a thoughtful pause. "I don't usually praise you to your face and make an undue fuss about you, do I, dear? I think I am disposed to be critical of you rather than otherwise. But you are so much superior to the men they generally put up, that I'm unable to reconcile myself to the idea that you're not to be anything distinguished after all. Of course I didn't really expect that you were going to be very great; and yet in politics one cannot always tell. Men no more remarkable than you have been elected President; though I'm not at all sure that I should have cared to have you in the White House."

"Yet you will not cease to love me now that I am doomed to be only a poor private citizen for the rest of my days?" I asked, fondly, as my arm stole around her waist, which, though no longer wisp-like as of yore, is shapely

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still. "Poor, too, in every sense," I added, unpleasantly reminded by the pressure of the check-book in my coat-pocket of my sadly diminished bank account.

"I am afraid I should continue to love you, Fred, even if you were bad—a Daniel Spinney or a Nicholas Long, for example," she answered, imprinting a kiss upon my cheek. "But you are an angel, dear."

It was worth being defeated for Congress in order to learn how much my wife appreciated me, and also to learn to appreciate her more thoroughly, philosophical deductions which I whispered in her ear with appropriate circumlocution. "But, Josephine," I added, "why do you include Spinney and Nick Long in the same category of wickedness."

"Because they are both wicked."

"But Nick is a reformer, my dear."

"Hasn't he nearly ruined you?"

"I had to hand over a great deal of money to him, certainly," I answered, ruefully.

"What did he spend it for?"

"I didn't ask him for the details, but he always said he needed it for printing, dear. You know there was a great deal of printing done," I hastened to add, feeling a little nervous under the stress of cross-examination. "Then there were the uniforms and the torches and the supper for the cadets."

"I know what they cost exactly. Fred, what do you suppose he could have used all that money for?"

"Printing, I have told you, Josephine. There are all sorts of expenses in a campaign of this sort, the details of which one has to leave to one's manager. I have implicit confidence in Nick's good judgment," I continued, a trifle austerely. To tell the truth I had been wondering myself where all the money had gone to. Josephine was thoughtful for several minutes, then she said: "Do you know, Fred, I have a feeling that if you had managed your own campaign without the aid of a reformer you would have got just as many votes—and—and we should have had money enough left to go to Japan."

If a woman has a prejudice against a man he might be spotless as the Archangel Gabriel and she would be able to pick a flaw in him.

(To be continued.)

"Here's to peace and a quiet life, my dear."

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SILENT AMYCLÆ.

(Virgil, Æneid 10, v. 564.)

By Edith M. Thomas.

I.

In Silent Amyclæ
They fear not the foray invading by night,
The lance flashing challenge afar on the height,
The vessels of war swift-cleaving the foam,
The spy from without, nor the traitor at home;
They fear but false rumor and panic alarms,
When the fool and the craven would rally to arms,
In silent Amyclæ.

II.

In Silent Amyclæ
They have sworn by the Gods and the Brothers divine
Who white through the dust of the battle shine—
By the Brothers they swear, that who raiseth the cry,
"Arm! for the foe is upon us!" shall die—
Be he priest of the temple, or bondsman, or lord,
He dies if he utters the warning abhorred
In silent Amyclæ!

III.

In Silent Amyclæ
Now Fear is afraid and the voices of Fear
Are quiet this many and many a year;
No oracle threats, no presage is heard,
They scan not the victim nor flight of the bird;
No pilgrim may enter with tidings of ill;
At the gate the voice of the warder is still
In silent Amyclæ.

IV.

In Silent Amyclæ
One midnight the sound of a legion tread!
All hear, but they speak not nor whisper their dread,
Alike do they tremble—dastard and brave,
From the sword and the torch swift runs the red wave—
By mornlight a city all voiceless and drear!
How art thou undone through thy scorn of all fear,
Ah, silent Amyclæ!

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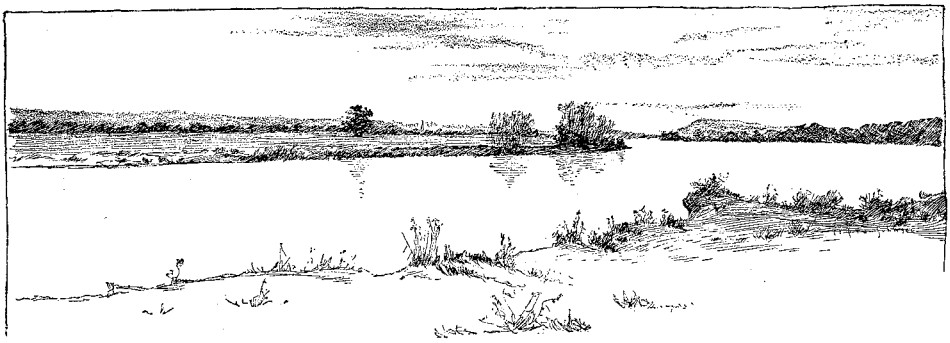

THE WEDDING JOURNEY OF MRS. ZAINTREE (BORN GREENLEAF).

By William Henry Shelton.

QUITE the greatest surprise that had ever been meted out to the fastidious members of the Peter Stuyvesant Club (limited) befell when the news came of the marriage of Colonel Zaintree to a lady of suitable age and accomplishments, whom, rumor said, he had met in Norway, where both parties to the inevitable had been engaged in the innocent pursuit of the midnight sun. That so eccentric a member of a close corporation of bachelors should do such a commonplace thing, under the vulgar cloak of secrecy, which involved a hasty return across the Atlantic and the successful avoidance of his friends, was regarded by Major Cavendish and his right and left hand adversaries of the Colonel's particular table as nothing less than a tricky finesse.

In addition to the concise and correct announcement of the names of the two high contracting parties in an evening journal, there followed the surprising statement that:

"The groom wore a ten-button frock coat of American broadcloth, with a boutonnière of golden nasturtiums on the left lapel; a turn-down linen collar, silver-gray trousers, creased, with gloves to match, and carried in his hand a stick of Irish blackthorn, the gift of the bride."

Both the Colonel and Mrs. Zaintree had spent many summers in Europe, during which sojourns (in severalty) they had explored that eminently respectable continent both along and beyond the ordinary itinerancy. Both had listened to the thunder of Niagara; the lady had visited the wonders of the Yosemite and the old Spanish Missions of Southern California, and the Colonel harbored some unpleasant recollections of the Great Geyser basin in the Yellowstone National Park. He had, in fact, cut his name in the soft clay of one of the minor basins, contrary to the Government keep-off-the-grass regulations; and to make a salutary example of him, the officer in charge had telegraphed the fact to the captain of cavalry at the entrance, and the colonel had been obliged to travel one hundred and sixty miles by stage to erase his signature.

Barring these points, and the railways necessary to reach them, and not taking into account some geographical knowledge the colonel had picked up with the Army of the Potomac, their own country, outside of a tiny circle which should include Newport and Tuxedo, was a wide terra incognita.

If the Colonel was bent on anything it was on making a unique wedding journey in the byways of travel, by unaccustomed means of transportation, leading to nowhere in particular, with necessarily no feverish anxiety on the part of the travellers to get there. With money in his purse and a check-

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book in his breast-pocket, and the hearty approval of the angel at his side, they were off for a romp in the dark, and about the whole strange business there was a delightful uncertainty, which was in itself a pretty satire on the element of uncertainty connected with the longer journey upon which they were making simultaneous entry with such light hearts and high hopes.

Of course they had to get out of town in an ordinary vestibule train, with its dreary, glittering vista of polished mahogany fittings, broken by staring silver-plated ornaments, monogram glass, nice-enough china dinner-service, ebony waiters in spotless linen, and the endless procession of respectables and fashionables, coming and going, reading papers, cutting the leaves of new books, and travelling-caps talking offensive politics with mysterious double eye-glasses. The Colonel tweaked his gray mustache and swore inwardly there should be an end of it, and madam composed her gloved hands and just perceptibly shrugged her well-bred shoulders that there should be so many observers of her happiness and withal such a wilderness of respectable indifference to it.

After a dainty breakfast of golden melon with water-cress, the freshest of rolls, and the most fragrant of coffee, served on a little table between the high-backed seats in their own particular domain, the Colonel tore himself away from his domestic happiness and walked forward to enjoy his cigar and his morning paper. Instead of stopping in the first smoking-compartment, he strolled on through car after car until he found a seat to his liking, and settling himself comfortably before a window, he was straightway lost in contemplation of the running landscape flooded with the sunlight of his own happiness. He forgot his morning paper, and even the small brown Habana hung unlighted between his listless fingers. His misspent life was before him, and the bachelor friends of his club, in their unsuspected misery, were jumbled with the fences and the trees, and the clouds were taking the shape of some of the girls he remembered. He was as far from them all and pitied them as much as if he had suddenly become the emperor of a continent in Mars.

Presently he bethought himself of his cigar, without forgetting his happiness, and struck a match on the iron fire-dogs in the hall of the Peter Stuyvesant.

"Hello, Zaintree, going to Chicago?"

The Colonel fell out of the clouds like a collapsed balloon, with an indistinct feeling that he had been engaged in something reprehensible.

"Nothing gone wrong, I hope," said the other—"drop in exchange or slump in cotton?"

"Not a bit of it, Ketcham," cried the Colonel, shaking his friend warmly by the hand. "Something has gone overwhelmingly right, and, to tell you an open secret, I have been getting married."

"Well, you're old enough. I congratulate you. Tickets for Sitka?"

"Not quite so bad as that," said the Colonel. "The tickets are nominally for Buffalo, but I can't promise you we shall not get off before we reach there and take a wagon across country. I beg you will be seated," continued the Colonel, laying open his cigar-case, "and after we have talked the matter over let me have the pleasure of presenting an old friend to Mrs. Zaintree. Certainly, Ketcham, you are about the last man I expected to find ashore in these sweltering days."

"If its yachting you mean, Colonel, I have given it up for family reasons," said the gentleman of the name of Ketcham, who was of about the Colonel's age, having a smooth-shaven face, large hearty Western ways, and something indescribable in his manner that hinted of soft winds blowing over many lands. "Wives have their limitations, Colonel," continued Commodore Ketcham. "Mine was launched without sea-legs and when a captain's first mate spends the best part of the cruise in the seclusion of the cabin, it's time to go ashore and stay there."

"Naturally," mused the Colonel.

"So the Happy Thought is dismantled and laid up indefinitely. I'm sorry for it too, Colonel; if she was in commission this minute I would put her at your disposal for a honeymoon cruise," and the ex-Commodore of the Buffalo

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Yacht Club laid one hand regretfully on the Colonel's knee and snapped the fingers of the other in vexation at his sheer inability to do the handsome thing.

The Colonel, who understood his friend thoroughly, expressed his regrets briefly and feelingly, knowing that the situation annoyed the Commodore like a belated thought haunting the memory of an after-dinner speech.

The two gentlemen now cast aside their cigars and took their way down the train, the Colonel with a comfortable pride in a new and inestimable possession, and the Commodore conscious of an agreeable curiosity and a personal solicitude concerning first impressions.

An hour later the train was running smoothly over the rails among the scattered homes of the laborers and market-gardeners on the outskirts of Rochester, the Commodore seated opposite to the bride with a comfortable feeling that he had known and admired her indefinitely, and a keen regret that circumstances over which he had no control were about to separate old friends and new.

Mrs. Zaintree was saying the thousand and one cordial things which a well-bred and kind-hearted lady knows so well how to say: "The Colonel's friends were her friends. The Commodore must certainly dine with them on his very earliest visit to New York, and she should take good care to find out his favorite dish before he came. She looked forward to the pleasure of knowing his wife, who was no sailor, and it was so sweet of him to give up the water for her sake."

"My dear Mrs. Zaintree," said the Commodore, "to be exact, I have given it up with a reservation. That is to say, the down-town house of Self & Co. has fitted up a couple of cabins, fore and aft, on the iron freighter Nautilus, and I go aboard sometimes for a cruise on the lake, with a friend or two. A basket of wine and a few brace of ducks in the larder, and a quiet rubber in the cabin. You understand, Colonel?"

"Why, look here," cried the Colonel, "that eclipses the idea of the yacht."

"It's ever so much jollier," exclaimed Mrs. Zaintree. "Do you know, I sailed on a Dutch lugger with fins, like a great fish, from Rotterdam to Ymuiden in the North Sea, with a little party of English and Americans last year, and it was the nicest trip of the whole summer."

"But my vessel is loaded with coal."

"And the Dutch fin-boat carried fish."

"Where is the Nautilus bound?" asked the colonel.

"There it is again," said the commodore; "unfortunately I haven't the remotest idea. She may be booked for Cleveland, or she may be for Three Mile Harbor, or any other port on the Lakes. The deck-hands swear all day and play the accordion all night. Cook cuts the beef in cubes——"

"Just like the Rotterdam lugger," broke in the lady, with enthusiasm, "and sailing with sealed orders too. Not another word, Commodore, in disparagement of the Nautilus. Anything that is good enough for Commodore Ketcham and his friends is good enough for us."

"Precisely so," said the Colonel. "Put us on board the Nautilus by all means, if our presence will be no hindrance to the business of the vessel."

"Not an atom," cried the Commodore, whose hand was already on his travelling-bag, with none too much time to make his South-bound train. "I'll telegraph the office to hold her until you come, and you must stop in the waiting-room of the station, like two orphans, until you are called for. I shall write the telegram in the carriage going across town, and Captain Webb and the cook will pipe you over the side in royal style. Tut, tut, not a word, and not an anxious thought for yourselves or your luggage, and good-by, and good-by, and a pleasant cruise," and the Commodore hurried away with the outgoing crowd.

It naturally occurred to Mrs. Zaintree, as the Commodore was disappearing, that it would be as well to conceal the fact of their recent marriage from the profane and musical deck-hands, and with that modest end in view she hurried the Colonel off in pursuit, who was just in time to buttonhole his friend as he was stepping into a carriage.

"You sly dog," laughed the Commodore, squeezing the Colonel's hand, "I was a young man myself once. I'll telegraph the captain that you expect

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your eldest son to come on board at Detroit."

The Colonel stood an inch higher in his own estimation as the carriage containing the Commodore rattled off over the stones. Mrs. Zaintree saw something outside the window that claimed her attention for a moment, and then she commended the Commodore's cleverness, and intimated that if they should not pass Detroit it would be a grave disappointment to the supposititious young man.

The July sun, climbing up into a cloudless sky, promised a day of unusual heat, and the long train had become twice as stuffy as before since the cruise on the lake had been decided on.

"It will be just like the Dutch lugger," said the lady, "only a great deal nicer. Instead of fishy planks the cabin-floor will be spread with white sand, and we can walk around the coal, and I am sure there will be no great patches on the Commodore's sails, and the captain will let me take a turn at the wheel, and we will imagine Lake Erie is the North Sea, and only think of it, you darling Colonel, we don't know where we are going."

The hot fragrance of the clover came in at the open window. The cool green of the corn overspread the gently rolling hills, away to the purple woods, and laughed in the face of the shimmering heat. The towns and the orchards slid by, and the long western-bound freight trains seemed to stand still, with a ridiculous make-believe of flurry and steam, for the flying express to pass.

The Colonel felt assured that the will of the Commodore was already working wonders in their behalf in the city by the lake. And so it turned out, for the carriage that picked them up at the station was already half-loaded with wicker-baskets and hampers, and the handsome assistant-engineer on the box knew all about them, and had anticipated all their wants just as if they had been expected for a month.

It was nothing that they had to mount a rickety ladder, and cross the deck of a schooner, whose greasy cook-shop was redolent of onions, and whose seamy sides smelt of tar and bilge-water. Another ladder rose from the offensive deck against a wall of iron, and the bronze smile of Captain Webb of the Nautilus was beaming a welcome from the top.

Madam the cook, in a clean white apron, with her keys in a basket, led them up the long deck to their quarters in the forecastle; and Wilhelm, her husband and first assistant, his bald head sparkling in the sun like the ship's binnacle, brought up the rear, to lend a hand in stowing the luggage, which was neatly piled outside a pretty white door, the formidable pyramid crowned with the Colonel's hat-box.

II.

"THE dear old Commodore!" thought Mrs. Zaintree, sweeping the polished decks with the comprehensive eye of an experienced globe-trotter, "it was all a fib about the coal." If the exclusive passengers of the Nautilus were pleased with the external appearance of the craft, its trim smoke-stacks crowned with a billow of scintillating heat from the suppressed energy below, what were their surprise and delight at the revelation of comfort and luxury that lay behind the little white door by the pyramid of luggage.

A darkened vista of cabins, two in number, panelled with sycamore and half-separated with silken draperies, and an opposite door opening on a well-appointed bath-room. A velvet carpet under foot; a white-curtained bed beyond the dividing drapery; great easy-chairs and couches backed with carved dolphins and upholstered in leather; glittering lamps hanging from the ceilings; a dainty writing-table hooked to the wall under the window looking on the deck; two other curtained windows overlooking the tarry bowsprit of the schooner alongside, and a little shelf of new novels with uncut leaves. A winding staircase led up to the captain's quarters above, and so out onto the short upper deck where the watch alternated before the glazed wheel-house.

"It's not a bit like the Dutch lugger with red fins," said the bride, out of a nest of cushions, "any more than little Holland is like big America, thanks to the charming taste of the Commodore."

There was a gentle throb in the tim-

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bers of the Nautilus, the tarry ropes had disappeared from the open windows, and a little stir of fresher air fluttered the curtains; a deluge of cool water from some mysterious source streamed over the cabins and presently spluttered and dashed against the door and window inboard, and when the forward cabins had received a satisfactory cleansing externally, the man with the hose turned his attention to the main-deck, and Colonel and Mrs. Zaintree, bound nowhere in particular, so far as they yet knew, were well out on the blue waters of Lake Erie, the black smoke billowing and tumbling from the twin stacks away aft with something mysterious about it, like the far-reaching hospitality of the Commodore.

It was quite a wonderful ship, the Nautilus, for a carrier of freight, and the coal was really battened down under the hatches, a full cargo of it. More than half of her length was clean unencumbered deck, stretching between the cabins fore and aft, protected by low bulwarks and dominated by two tall masts without a thread of canvas; and this timber paddock lay in front of the Colonel's door, so that once out of sight of land, where the cool winds tempered the warmth of the sun, the fortunate couple found it a delightful promenade whereon to saunter up and down, encased in warm flannels.

Indeed it was quite a respectable walk to and from the dining-cabin, where the cook's green-and-gold parrot chose the nick of time in which to scream, "Make way for the captain." In the little state cabin aft, alongside the main dining-room, a round table was laid with two covers for the Commodore's guests, and with a third, by request of the Colonel, for the use of the captain whenever he was at liberty to join them. The Nautilus's monogram silver came out of its glass-case, and the private lockers yielded of their store of dainty linen and china to grace this extra board.

At supper, on the very first day out, Captain Webb, who had gone to the extra length of putting on his coat for the occasion, which staggered the parrot, eying him through the open door, into utter silence, announced that the steamer would pass up the Detroit River the next evening, where young Mr. Zaintree would come out in the reporter's boat.

"Long since you have seen your son, ma'am?" asked the captain.

Mrs. Zaintree said it was a long time, and the Colonel hastened to add that Jack was not very reliable, and he shouldn't be surprised to see the boat come alongside without him.

"Never fear, ma'am," said the captain, with an effort at gallantry, which had about it a flavor of the Commodore's wine, "if your son esteems his charming mother as she deserves, and he wouldn't be the Colonel's boy if he didn't, we shall hook him up with the evening papers. Dear me, no," continued the captain, "the boat never stops, she just slows down a bit and we lower a ladder. Of course, ma'am, he will sleep in this cabin, it is all we have to offer him; but the more the merrier, Colonel, and it's all in the family. If you should conclude, ma'am, that you would rather have him on one of the sofas in your quarters, the cook will fix him comfortable. If you don't own the boat this trip I don't know who does," and the captain closed the outer door behind him and went whistling away to his watch.

The Colonel and his bride laughed merrily at the huge success of the Commodore's telegram. They looked down at the grimy stokers, feeding the furnaces, and made a descent into the moist, warm atmosphere of the engine-room, where the great oily giant of propulsion was doing its mysterious, noiseless work, with a ceaseless gliding of steel bars, flecked with little heart-beats of thin steam from the joints of the monster's glittering brass-mounted harness.

The engineer was so polite to the Commodore's guests and so proud of his machinery, and the atmosphere of the ship-wide room was so balmy, with its pretty writing-desk in the corner, and the green water rushing by the open ports, and the curious dial on the engine, that dropped an additional black figure for every revolution of the shaft (and had been dropping figures ceaselessly from the very start up into the hundred thousands)—these things were all so interesting and so marvellous that the oleaginous odor of the place became a rather pleasant perfume, so that when

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they went out the chill of the evening on deck was sharpened by comparison.

The steam was turned on in the radiators in the forward cabins, and the lamps alight, but the night was so fine outside that our travellers went up to join the captain's watch in front of the wheel-house.

. . . . . .

It was perhaps four o'clock in the afternoon of the second day of the cruise when the Nautilus was steaming up past the forts and the big straw-colored Exhibition building, relieved against the canopy of smoke which overhung the city of Detroit, spreading back from the flat level of the river.

The Colonel was eager to get the papers, and Mrs. Zaintree was plying the captain with questions about every prominent object on either shore, going from side to side of the bow, coming into collision with the capstan on the way to Canada, and running against the binnacle on the Michigan side, and manifesting less interest in her offspring, the captain thought, than a she-bear would show for her cub. It rather annoyed the captain to think so. In many respects Mrs. Zaintree was the most accomplished woman Captain Webb had ever come in contact with. In his private log he had entered her as "a thoroughbred." Her perfect self-possession seemed to him like an invisible armor through which her frank, cordial manner and engaging womanly ways shone like a soft, warm light. Her low modulated voice struck on his ear like music. In every other respect the Colonel's wife was altogether lovely, but her conduct as a mother completely staggered his reckoning.

If the lady divined, to some extent, what was passing in the captain's mind, she was too honest to dissemble unnecessarily, and a few unavoidable expressions of regret for the non-appearance of the mythical Jack, after Detroit should be left behind, would make it all right. When she restored him his glass, with a pretty speech of thanks for his kindness, and disappeared down the companion-way, and that just before he got the first view of the reporter's boat pushing out from the shore, the captain shook his head and pondered on the mysterious ways of womankind.

At the same moment that these perplexing thoughts were vexing the captain's brain, Mr. Jack Dorr, of Toledo, O., seated in the stern of the newsman's boat, had his eye on the Nautilus steaming up the river. He was speculating as to how his four dogs and all his hunting traps and personal luggage could be safely got over the side of the steamer, which was totally oblivious of his existence and wouldn't have stopped for the Commodore himself. But Mr. Jack Dorr had an authorization from the Toledo office, duly signed and sealed, to board the Nautilus as she passed Detroit, and his serenity was not in the least disturbed by the difficulty the officers would encounter in making the transfer of himself and his effects. That was their business he flattered himself, and he was only conscious of an amused curiosity as to how they would acquit themselves in the emergency he was about to thrust upon them.

"The Nautilus is a slowin' up for somethin'," the boatman observed, as he stuffed a bundle of newspapers into a tin pail, with a line attached to the bail. Mr. Jack Dorr observed for himself that a ladder was already over the side, and instead of holding up the potent document as he had fully intended to do, he threw away his cigar, and administered a corrective cuff apiece to two restive young hounds who showed signs of disturbing the dignity of his establishment with their uncalled-for music. "That must be the skipper," he thought, as he complacently took in the authoritative figure of Captain Webb, making the boat's line fast to a thole-pin.

"Don't disturb yourself, Mr. Zaintree," shouted the authoritative figure at the rail, "until we get the dogs on board."

Mr. Jack Dorr had not the slightest intention of disturbing himself. It was not his way. He had been agreeably surprised by the abundant evidence that he, or somebody else, was expected to board the vessel at this particular point, and the captain, himself, addressing him by the unheard-of name of Zain-

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tree, gave a fresh and pleasing interest to the mystery.

"Look here, John," said Mr. Jack Dorr, from his seat in the stern, naming the newsman at random, "take that liver-and-white setter under your arm, and drop her on board; see? Don't be afraid of her, man. It's all right, skipper, my dogs are up to this sort o' thing."

When the boatman came down for the last dog he brought the surprising information that his passenger's father and mother were on board.

"The devil you say," said Mr. Jack Dorr. "I'm glad to know it."

"Old folks all right, skipper?" cried Jack, at last, with a hearty grasp of the captain's hand that won the sailor's heart by storm. "They don't appear to be dying to see their son."

"Your reckoning is about right," said Captain Webb, taking no care to conceal the double meaning of his words. "There comes the *Colonel* now."

Mr. Jack Dorr took in his new parent at a glance—a glance of satisfied approval, and hastened across the deck to meet him.

"Glad to see you, governor! Never saw you looking better!" And there was an amused twinkle of inquiry in Jack's eyes as he looked straight across into the Colonel's.

The Colonel was taken altogether by surprise, for he had been reading in the cabin, and came out with the expectation of encountering nothing more personal than the editorial thrusts in the Detroit papers, and when he saw Jack greeting the captain, he suspected that the Commodore had put off a practical joke on him, and he concluded to accept the situation philosophically. The Colonel was a sensitive man, and it was no part of his plan to be made the laughing-stock of the crew, so he returned the strange young man's greeting heartily enough, and the two turned away in the direction of the forecastle.

"You mustn't mind my calling you governor," said Jack. "As the boys say, 'Everything goes when you're away from home.' The captain called me Zaintree, or Braintree, over the rail, and sent me word that my father and mother were on board, and I accepted the situation, pop, just as I found it; see?"

"The captain called you Zaintree, did he?" said the Colonel with a smile. "What does the Commodore call you?"

"If you mean Commodore Ketcham," said Jack, "I don't know him from a side of sole leather, but here is my card. You are Colonel Zaintree, I presume, and as for myself, the surprising events that have occurred since I came alongside this ship leave me in something of a fog as to who I am."

The Colonel put on his gold eyeglasses and read the very correct social statement:

MR. JOHN DORR.

"Hum," mused the colonel, "then you don't know the Commodore, Mr. Dorr?"

"I haven't the pleasure," said Jack. "And by the way, governor, if our relationship is to go on this trip, you had better forget my name altogether and call me plain Jack."

Colonel Zaintree pondered the situation in silence for a moment, during which he ran a quick eye over the irreproachable exterior of the young man who had accosted him so breezily. The disagreeable alternative of renouncing the relationship already publicly assumed, the Colonel wisely decided, had best be submitted to the judgment of the third party interested.

Captain Webb saw the gentlemen disappear through the little white door with regret, for the singular maternal conduct of the otherwise admirable Mrs. Zaintree was still vexing his mind, and he had hoped to be a witness of such a cordial meeting with her son as should triumphantly vindicate her character as a mother.

When, however, a half-hour afterward, he looked down from the bridge and saw the three pacing the deck arm in arm, the lady addressing the greater part of her conversation to Jack, he thought it a very pretty family tableau, and privately voted himself a fool for his suspicions.

If he had seen the meeting in the cabin, without hearing the words that were spoken, he would have been equally satisfied with Mrs. Zaintree's conduct as a high-bred mother and with Jack's behavior as a dutiful son. The set

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speech of the Colonel in presenting the young gentleman died on his lips, half uttered, as he saw his wife drop the book she had been reading and advance with both hands extended, her face beaming with a smile of welcome and uttering the one word, "*Jack!*"

As for Mr. Jack Dorr, he came as near being surprised as was consistent with his serene nature.

Having possessed himself of the lady's hands, he paused and counted ten, during which prudent operation he digested some of the toughest features of the situation.

"It is a most unexpected pleasure," he said, "to salute the late Miss Arabella Greenleaf as 'mother,'" and with an air of the most profound respect he bent forward and kissed the lady on the cheek.

"It's all right, governor," cried Mr. Jack Dorr, turning apologetically to the Colonel, and with an all-comprehensive sweep of his long arms, "I congratulate everybody," and Mr. Jack Dorr thereupon threw himself upon the nearest chair and laughed until the tears came into his eyes.

"Edith opened your cards this morning before I left the house. How's Fred? Oh, Fred's all right. And Louise? Louise is a corker, and don't you forget it? Oh, you giddy children!" cried Jack after another burst of laughter, "you are playing the skipper with this story of a son coming on board, and the dear old boy don't tumble."

"It is clear there has been no improvement in you, Jack," said Mrs. Zaintree (born Greenleaf). "You are behaving as badly as when you were horrifying all England on the Rotterdam boat."

When the coincidence of Jack's happening was made plain to the Colonel, and the mystery of the eldest son explained more fully to Jack, it was mutually agreed that the tripartite family relation, offensive and defensive, must be sustained on board the Nautilus.

III.

It was a very pretty family party, the captain thought, grouped outside the cabin-door, after tea. Jack was so devoted to his very youthful-looking mamma, and the handsome hunting dogs were chasing each other about the deck, and coming back at the call of the Colonel.

Jack was telling Mrs. Zaintree that his real parents, whom he knew she ranked among her most valued friends, were on their way to Duluth, where they would all meet.

"It will be no surprise, this wedding business," said Jack, "for Edith telegraphed them to where they were stopping in Canada as soon as she received your cards."

The Nautilus was at that moment steaming across the beautiful St. Clair, the land a faint blue streak on the horizon. Owing to the extreme heat of the day the sky had been rolling with thunder-caps, and as the sun was setting the gorgeous cloud-forms were sobering down into a dome of infinite delicacy of tints, uniting in almost imperceptible lines, through the purple and golden haze, with the transparent surface of the lake. How enchanting and unreal it was! They seemed to be floating in the centre of a vast globe of color, the sunset below as well as above them. Lying low on the horizon, athwart the delicate purple and lavender clouds, a tattered rope of coal smoke completely surrounded them, now shredded into almost imperceptible strands, and again spread out into eccentric zigzag masses throwing deep shadows on the water.

It was all very soothing and tranquillizing, but Jack grew restive, nevertheless, as the music of dancing on an excursion steamer came floating across the water, and with a genius for spreading the contagion of his own high spirits, he broke the spell of the sunset, and led the way up to a more extended outlook over the bow, where it happened that the captain was pacing his solitary watch.

It was beautiful to see Jack seat his handsome mamma where the very best view could be had, and then wrap her up to the throat with his own filial hands, against the chill of the evening air.

"I tell you, ma'am," said Captain

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Webb, "I knew your son was the right sort the minute he come over the rail. I reckon, ma'am, it must be a great comfort to you to have him on board."

Mrs. Zaintree smiled and said that Jack was always very good to her.

"It's the way she raised me, skipper," said Jack. "She never laid a hand on me in anger. Taught me love and respect, and that sort o' thing. And the governor here, too, has been quite too indulgent for my good. Makes me too liberal an allowance. Took me to the races before I was out of short clothes and played the winner in my name, and put the stakes in my little bank. Now, I'll leave it to you, captain, as a fair-minded man," and Jack spoke feelingly, "if the governor has any call to kick, as I am grieved to say he does, when I happen to play the wrong horse?"

"Never mind him, captain," said the Colonel, with some austerity; "I have got him now where horses won't trouble him for a few days. What's that double row of peach-trees growing out of the lake just ahead? It looks like a straight-away course for youngsters, Jack."

The captain explained that the curious embankments formed the St. Clair canal, and pointed out the light-houses on either end and the buoys marking the channel of approach. The peach-trees turned out to be brook willows bordering well-worn pathways along either side, and the light-houses looked quite domestic with their vegetable gardens and out-houses. The Colonel inspected the timbered sides, and the steam-dredge moored against the right-hand bank, with the eye of an engineer, and Mrs. Zaintree had the captain's glass levelled on the club-houses and hotels and cottages that stretched away to the left, beyond the farther light-house, and opposite to the swampy Canadian shore.

When his honored parents grew tired of watching the endless line of lights in cottages, and lanterns hung among green trees, marking pre-empted claims on Government sand-banks, Jack remained to share the captain's watch and see the Nautilus "tooled" through the river into Lake Huron.

Mr. Jack Dorr made himself doubly agreeable now that he was relieved of parental restraint. By means of some well-chosen and highly flavored stories, which he told with great cleverness, he drew peals of laughter from the two men at the wheel. It afforded a peculiar satisfaction to Jack to stir up these ghostly listeners in the shadowy wheel-house, who broke the silence at long intervals by a sepulchral echo of the captain's orders. He was glad to know that they were awake, and he would give them something more interesting to repeat in the forecastle than the gossip of a respectable family.

Jack and the captain got on bravely. They talked local geography and navigation until Gratiot light hove in sight, and then they talked dog until the boat was far out in Lake Huron. The captain was up on dogs. In fact he owned the best bred young Irish setter "in the town of Ste. Marie or the State of Michigan," and if things were favorable at the lock they would have time to run over to his house and look at it.

"Dog for sale?" asked Jack. "The deuce you say. Strikes me you want big money. Well, I'll tell you what I'll do, skipper. If the governor is as good-natured to-morrow as he has been to-day, and the pup's points please me, I'll take it. Good-night," and Mr. Jack Dorr went away to his cabin aft.

All the next day the Nautilus labored through a choppy sea, under a leaden sky; not a glimpse of land and rarely a ship in sight. The anchors had been dropped overboard during the night, off the entrance to St. Mary's River, whose tortuous channel was not to be navigated in the dark, but with the first rosy streaks of dawn they were again under way.

When Jack awoke in the early morning the sun was just rising—a great golden ball suspended over the Canada woods. The sun having no particular charm for him just then, he saluted it with some rather uncomplimentary remarks and turned his face to the opposite wall. At the same moment a peculiar shock ran through the timbers of the vessel and he tumbled out and thrust his head into the unwelcome sunlight in time to see the water boiling back from the bow yellow with mud.

"That settles it," said Mr. Jack Dorr,

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and he turned in again and went to sleep. His repose, however, was short and troubled, for the deck-hands were hammering on iron outside his window. When he dressed himself and came on deck he learned that the rudder-gearing had broken and that the Nautilus was lying helpless across the channel. On the port side a small pine-tree overhung the rail, which, he found on inspection, was attached to the mast of an American tug which had borne down with great promptness on the stranded monster, scenting a job. On the starboard side a Canadian revenue cutter, flying the Union Jack, had already made fast; and by the number of craft in sight he rightly judged that they would soon be the centre of a considerable fleet.

This interesting prospect rather heightened the relish of Jack's breakfast, which he enjoyed with unusual deliberation, and even lingered behind to worry the parrot. As he lighted his morning cigar and returned to the deck, he was peculiarly in a mood to take the world as it came. It was well that it was so, for the full bloom of Mr. Jack Dorr's serenity was presently disturbed by a familiar voice pronouncing his name, and turning about he confronted his real father, standing in an open gangway alongside a large-eyed Jersey cow.

The meeting was altogether a happy one until the elder Dorr expressed his intention to climb over the boards put up to confine the cow, and come on board the Nautilus.

"Don't do it," said Jack. "I've got one governor on board already; in fact I am travelling with my parents, and your presence would compromise the family arrangements."

"Hang the family arrangements," cried Jack's father, "I'm coming on board to look into the family arrangements. Do you want to disgrace your mother, you young vagabond? Do you know she is somewhere on the upper deck of this steamer overlooking your deviltry at this moment?"

"Come now, pop; my mother is all right, Heaven bless her. I am more anxious just now about the charming lady who sustains that relation to me on board this boat. Easy now, governor, easy. You know her already."

The elderly gentleman was fast getting beyond the control of his son's peculiar methods of pacification, and the mild-eyed cow was staring at him through her halter with a dumb look of wonderment. It was fortunate for Jack, at this critical moment, that the Colonel and his bride emerged from the breakfast cabin. It was fortunate that Jack saw them and beckoned them over.

He wisely resigned the task of pacifying his father into the hands of the charming Mrs. Zaintree (born Greenleaf), who had already played the same rôle in his behalf with eminent success. While the explanations and congratulations were going on between his two governors, Jack relighted his cigar, and turned his attention to the pretty Canadian girls, in sailor hats, looking over the rail of the passenger steamer. Sure enough, there was his mother under an awning, but she didn't see him; and cautioning the bride to keep out of sight until he had explained the situation, he clambered through the gangway, leaving his placated father on board the Nautilus.

Jack's mother had it particularly impressed upon her that Arabella Greenleaf was not known to be a bride on board the Nautilus — not by a good many years, Jack said — and then the ladies were allowed to greet each other, at a distance, and throw kisses, and console their warm hearts with the prospect of a completer unburdening in the hotel at Duluth. Jack was so fond of his real mother, and lingered so long in her company, that the passenger steamer came near backing away with him on board. As it was, he slid down a flag-staff and jumped to the deck of the Nautilus, in imminent danger of breaking his bones.

The Canadian boat was well in the offing when Jack walked into his own cabin, and, to his consternation, found his father and the Colonel pledging each other in the Commodore's champagne.

"Well, here is a go," cried Jack. "Mother alone on the other boat, damage repaired, lines cast off, and Heaven help me, with two governors to manage on one ship. Now don't get excited, sir; it's too late for that sort of thing. You

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are here to stay, and she won't miss you until we get up to the locks."

Of course there was a little commotion; the gentlemen rushed on deck only to find that the two ships were out of hailing distance. Mr. Dorr the elder consoled himself with the belief that his wife would think he was in the barber's shop, or the wheel-house, or the engine-room, or somewhere else on board, for he had a habit of roaming about the steamer. He would get back where he belonged during the passage of the locks of the Saint Mary's, and his wife wouldn't believe him when he related his adventure.

Jack saw the captain passing, and hailed him. "This gentleman," he said, "is a friend of the governor's; got left by the passenger steamer. Governor Dorr, Captain Webb. Ex-Governor Dorr of Florida, I believe." It had occurred to Jack's fertile brain that he could thus forestall the danger of a slip of the tongue on his part, and for the remainder of the passage jumble his two governors to his heart's content. "He is rather a distinguished stowaway," continued Jack, "but I reckon we can take care of him up to the locks."

At this he left the governors in the company of the captain, and hastened away to apprise the Colonel's bride of the new official dignity he had conferred on his father. It seemed to Jack that his old friend Arabella Greenleaf had never been more charming than he found her at that moment, in the luxurious cabin of the Nautilus, flushed with the excitement of the recent meeting and full of enthusiasm in view of the coming reunion at Duluth.

"And two long days on Lake Superior before we get there," said she, sorrowfully. "I didn't think yesterday that anything could happen to make this delightful voyage too long. What a pity it is, when we are all bound to the same port, we must travel by different ships. Oh! Jack," and the lady's face brightened at the thought, "we must get your mother transferred to the Nautilus while we are passing through the locks, instead of returning your father to the Canadian steamer. Come, come, Jack; I'll appeal to Captain Webb, as a personal favor."

"Well now, my very enthusiastic friend," said Jack, interposing his bulk between the lady and the door, "you want to compose yourself first, and bear in mind that the situation is considerably complicated on this ship already. The arrangement can undoubtedly be effected. I suspect that Captain Webb is rather fond of you—fancy he will grant your request jolly quick. But you must be very cool-headed when you tackle him, and not go blurting out things about my mother, and forgetting that you are a mother yourself."

"Oh, dear!" sighed the lady, "what a tangled web we weave——"

"That's what it is, my dear mamma. But take a little time to consider. There's lots of time. Two good hours. Let's begin," and in a moment they were walking up and down the deck outside in consultation.

Close off the port rail a herd of American cows was standing in the edge of the river, affording a soothing object-lesson in patience, as they lazily switched the flies from their sides and dozed ruminant in the broad sunlight. The Canadian passenger steamer was threading the channel in the wake of the Nautilus, its high sides and deck-cabins resembling an Atlantic coaster, and its dingy color suggesting an unpainted farm-house.

IV.

As Jack had predicted, Captain Webb graciously granted Mrs. Zaintree's request, gallantly intimating that he would turn the ship into a privateer to oblige her, and the late Arabella Greenleaf made short work of the objections of the paternal Dorr. By the time they sighted the granite portal of Lake Superior, the flashing rapids of the "Soo" tumbling over the rocks, under the airy trestle of the Canadian Pacific on the right, and the white houses and green park of Ste. Marie lying to the left, everything was settled on board the Nautilus. Jack was to take an extra berth in the captain's cabin and resign his own to his parents like a dutiful son. He fully appreciated the advantages of the new arrangement, throwing him, as it would, into extra confidential relations with the navigator

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of the Nautilus. It would help him to maintain his grip on the situation. He foresaw that the management of two sets of parents, on the same ship, under the critical eyes of the crew, would require the greatest coolness on his part. Not that he felt any great anxiety, or perplexity, or unusual responsibility. Altogether it was the most delightful and inspiring emergency that Mr. Jack Dorr had ever figured in. He fairly revelled in it. Instead of perplexing him it nerved him and cooled his brain.

While the steamers lay below the lock he found time to go across the park with Captain Webb and look at his Irish setter, and buy it too, at a rather exorbitant figure, not because he wanted it, but because that stroke of liberality on his part would establish him the more firmly in the good graces of the captain.

On their return with the superfluous dog he found his mother on board. The two ladies were so absorbed in each other that while the small fleet of steamers was rising on the boiling surface of the lock they had shut themselves up in the cabin. Jack and his two governors, on the contrary, took a lively interest in the passage through the great granite gateway of the lakes. Nothing escaped them, from the hydraulic working of the lock to the shining soldiers ogling the village girls, and the Chippewa half-breeds hawking fish freshly taken from the rapids. They looked regretfully upon the last barefooted urchin of Ste. Marie watching his bobber in the sunlight as they steamed away through the open draw of the Canadian Pacific, and passed the light-house onto the bosom of the greatest of the lakes.

Fully determined as Jack was to guard the secret of Mrs. Zaintree, he had no idea of neglecting any favorable opportunity to complicate the situation still further. His serenity always increased as he succeeded in multiplying difficulties, and he proposed to give his genius for comedy full play. He saw a rather humorous possibility at hand, but he was never in a hurry, and after looking thoughtfully down at the green water slipping by, he spent a lazy afternoon reading in the warm sunshine on deck.

In the evening he joined the captain's watch. The moonlight silvered the smooth surface of the lake; here and there the lights of a steamer twinkled in the hazy offing; a huge banner of black smoke trailed back against the canopy of countless stars, and so still was it that the ticking of the wood-work could be heard as the great boat warped along. The listening ears in the shadowy wheel-house were not in the least annoying to Jack; he found it perfectly convenient to ignore them.

He yawned and broke the silence:

"Rather agreeable elderly people we took on board to-day?" (Pause and more silence.) "Wouldn't spot the old lady for a bride now, would you, skipper?"

"Go 'way," said the captain, rousing to the occasion.

"Fact," said Jack, "we met her abroad last year. Old maid then. Second matrimonial trip for the governor. Yes, skipper, they are on their wedding-journey now."

"Well," said the captain, after a pause, "we'll have to make it as pleasant for 'em as we can."

That very night as Jack lay on his bed, tossing restlessly about in his new and rather narrow quarters, he heard the music of accordions swelling up from the direction of the after-cabins. The captain was sleeping soundly after his watch, and the see-saw droning of the music was so satisfactory to Jack's mind, and withal so soothing to his spirit, that he fell asleep himself and dreamed that he was leading a serenade.

Anybody could see with half an eye that something had occurred to put new life in the crew of the Nautilus. The stokers sang more lustily at their work. The deck-hands were noisier than ever in the gangway of the forecastle and prolonged their orgies to a later hour. Old Wilhelm's bald head sparkled in the sun like a binnacle that contained a secret. The captain had a provokingly knowing look in his eye, and the ship itself forged ahead as if it were informed through all its timbers with a new life and energy.

For a plain sailor-man Captain Webb was rather profuse in his attention to the elder lady on board. And this extra devotion did not escape the observation of the younger lady.

To Mrs. Zaintree the crew were plain, civil men, while Mrs. Dorr confessed to

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her friend that there was an indescribable something in their manner that made her uncomfortable. She might be too sensitive, but she couldn't overcome the feeling. As to that German woman, the cook, her manners were dreadful. When Jack had come into the cabin that morning and kissed her, his own mother (which was very nice of him, it was so very unusual), that creature had sniffed and walked out of the room with the air of a woman insulted. To this Mrs. Zaintree replied by reminding her friend that, so far as Jack was concerned, they had exchanged places for the trip. In the light of this forgotten arrangement Mrs. Dorr could overlook the conduct of the cook, but it was a horrid boat and she should be glad to get ashore; and Mrs. Zaintree, too, began to feel that the situation was anything but a pleasant one.

The captain was conscious that both ladies treated him with a degree of restraint, and held themselves aloof in a rather puzzling way. If there was anything wrong with the ladies, the three gentlemen were doing all they could to make up for it. Three more affable and downright jolly gentlemen, the captain was forced to admit, had never gone up on his boat. As to women, in the abstract, he was driven to the conclusion that it was a mistake to have them on board.

When he confided to Jack that there was a screw loose somewhere, and that his navigation among the women was a failure, that young gentleman entered feelingly into the subject of his perplexity, and suggested that the bride might be offended because he had not sufficiently acknowledged her state on board. Some little complimentary demonstration, he thought, might make it all right. As that night's dinner would be the last on board, Jack proposed to make it an extra festive occasion, and volunteered to stand by his friend to the best of his ability. Old Wilhelm was called up and given the necessary directions. Jack spread the news of the dinner among the guests, and when the ladies encountered the captain on deck they thanked him so graciously that he felt that whatever misunderstanding there might have been, was healed already. Jack was a wonderful manager, and the good feeling on board mounted to enthusiasm. It was a day of days on the great lake. Still water under a cloudless sky. A mirage here and a mirage there, and the ship's glass passing from hand to hand. Steamers in the distance assumed all sorts of fantastic shapes, and bore down on them in the form of curious covered barges, and loomed up with as many as four decks, and shifted themselves into Spanish galleons, and then gradually put off all disguise and steamed by, the very counterparts of the Nautilus.

If Mrs. Zaintree composed herself to read in the shade of the bridge, the show began again in the great azure amphitheatre. Some far-away tow of schooners climbed up into a tower of canvas or turned slow somersaults in the hazy distance and then melted away in the act of turning. Jack said that it was a very creditable little circus to usher in the captain's dinner, which differed in this respect from dinners on shore, where the mirage commonly unfolded itself afterward.

It was a long time after the green-and-gold parrot cried: "Make way for the captain," before that promoter of the feast got himself into a sufficiently genial and convivial state of mind to lead off in the speaking. The captain was so long, in fact, in coming to the point that Jack took the floor in his behalf, and made one of his characteristic after-dinner speeches, in which he said, among other things, that his friend, Captain Webb, of the Nautilus, was well aware of the interesting relations sustained by certain parties on board his ship; that there were some things which could not be concealed from so shrewd an observer as the captain; that his friend the captain had sought in every way to serve the Commodore's guests, and that, in tendering this little testimonial dinner to the lady who was the distinguished guest of the occasion, he trusted that the others would join him in congratulations and good wishes; and, finally, he begged to say in behalf of his parents on board, that the courtesy and kindness of the captain and the marked attention of the crew could never be forgotten by him or by them.

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As Jack sat down without having drawn out any of the applause which his ingenious speech merited, the captain arose promptly and proposed the health of the bride in a few well-chosen remarks, during which he looked hard across the table at Mr. and Mrs. Dorr, who smiled in return and thought it a very clever nautical way of taking them into his confidence at the expense of the Colonel, and not so trying to the bride as if he had stared directly at her.

Of course the Colonel felt called upon to respond, which he did, after a brief hesitation, by proposing the health of Captain Webb of the Nautilus, which sentiment Mr. and Mrs. Dorr applauded so heartily that the captain was fain to be satisfied with their response by proxy, although he was a good deal surprised that an ex-Governor should not be a fluent after-dinner speaker.

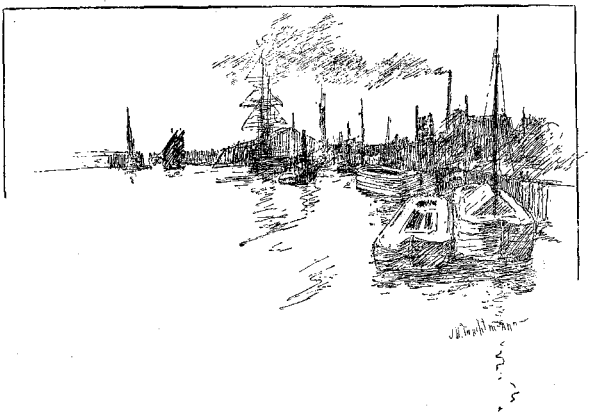
The captain was mightily pleased with the success of his little banquet, and his guests were so surprisingly jolly over it that he felt himself quite a social lion. They were so very merry that they would never desert him until they got the first glimpse of the far-away lights of Duluth. Jack and his two governors, with their cigars, and the ladies in warm wraps, kept the deck far into the night, and made it very lively for the men at the wheel. The long lines of electric lights on the granite hill-side flashed row above row, and shot long lances into the lake, and the great shadowy elevators were piled up against the western sky before ever the captain was left alone to ponder on the wonderful cleverness of Jack's management, and rub his hands in gleeful memory of his own shrewdness and penetration.

"A bridal party go up on my boat and I not know it at sight!" thought the captain. "Not much—not if they were turned of ninety."

"You are a sly one, Governor Dorr," he muttered to himself as he was parting with his guests on the wharf next morning. "Mighty sly, Governor, but you must get the rice out of your hair before you come on board the Nautilus."

And to Mrs. Zaintree, he said:

"You are a pattern mother of a pattern son, ma'am, and if I did think you a bit unfeeling when Jack was coming on board it's because I'm not a society man, ma'am, and didn't know the thoroughbred trick."



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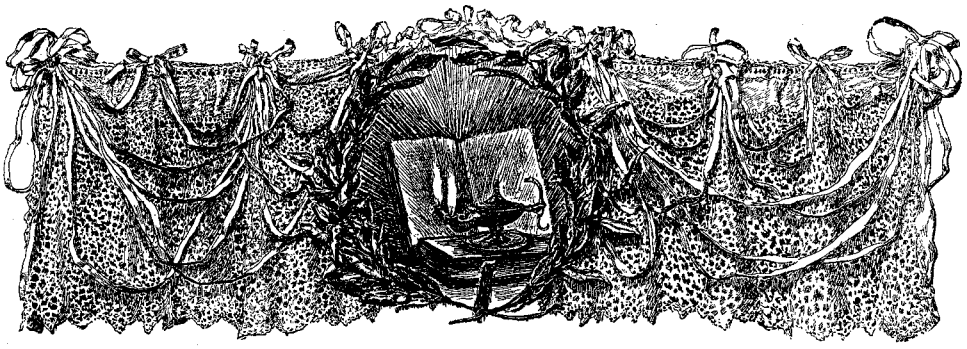

THE POINT OF VIEW

At least one New York newspaper kept close track of the sale of the Spitzer collection in Paris, and gave daily reports of the more important articles bought, and the prices paid for them. It might seem as if such reports were of interest only to collectors, and very rich collectors at that, for the total sum realized at the sale ran up into the millions, and the average price of single pieces approached a thousand dollars. Nevertheless, it was an edifying sale for a philosopher of moderate income to follow, because of the important testimony it bore to the vast number of expensive things that people who could not afford to buy them could get along just as comfortably without. The assurance that millions of dollars can easily be spent for things, no one of which is indispensable, or even highly important, to human happiness, is always fit to make the citizen whose circumstances are merely moderate less restless in the circumscribed limits of his earthly lot. To have all the Spitzer treasures sold, and not to have bought even one of them, and still to find life thoroughly remunerative and satisfactory is a gainful experience, and one worth some newspaper reading to acquire.

An experience of the same sort is possible at the Chicago Fair. There one sees thousands of beautiful and costly objects fit to delight the eye and stimulate the imagination. To see all and to buy nothing, and still to come home justified and content, richer for what one's mind can carry away and very little poorer in one's pocket, is a possibility which is within every Fair-goer's reach, and which the great majority will realize. And it is worth realizing, if only for its use in helping them to recognize the agreeable truth that the material things that are essential to satisfactory existence are comparatively few and comparatively cheap. The capacity to recognize that, vividly and practically, is an acquirement fairly comparable in value with accumulations in the bank.

Moreover, it is a feasible acquirement. It can be taught. There is no certain possibility of making a phenomenal money-getter out of even an exceptionally intelligent boy, but it is fairly within the province of education so to train a lad that he can get more pleasure and far more profit out of a little money than another of inferior training can out of much. To be "passing rich on fifty pounds a year" is an accomplishment not readily attainable in the present state of money values; but to be richer on five thousand dollars a year than another man is on fifty thousand may not be as easy as lying, but it is easy enough. The necessaries of life are food, shelter, and raiment; the more important luxuries are cleanliness, books, society, good clothes, and a reasonable amount of leisure. In order to live his best, man wants time to think and plenty to think about. A moderate amount of travel is a luxury that enlivens the intellectual processes and is favorable to health. All the necessaries are easily procurable in these days, and none of the reasonable luxuries is very dear. The

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things that cost much money are chiefly those that delight the eye, and gratify not so much by use as by mere possession. To that class of superfluous luxuries belong all the objects in the Spitzer collection and most of the more fascinating things in the Liberal Arts Building at the Fair. One does not have to own rich things to enjoy them. The very best of them are in public collections (where the best of the Spitzer pieces are going), and abundance of others, in private hands, are not hard to get a sight of. It is more or less the same with that other grade of superfluities to which belong horses and yachts, truffles, pâté de foi gras, terrapin, canvas-back ducks, champagne, English grooms, valets, and everything that contributes to make idleness palatable. There is undoubtedly some fun to be had with these objects, which do possess a certain sort of intrinsic value; but it is true of some of them, as it is of vases and pictures, that you can get the usufruct of them without owning them, since if a man drives two grooms and four horses it costs you nothing to see him go by. For the rest it may be said that there is just as much enjoyment of a different sort to be had without these things, and whether the cheaper or the more expensive pleasures are really preferable is simply a matter of education and taste. Consideration of the ease with which the five-thousand-a-year man can go without every one of the luxuries for which his neighbor, who has fifty thousand a year, spends four-fifths of his income, is fit to give the reflecting observer some useful ideas. The life of a family on two hundred dollars a year is immensely superior to existence on one hundred. Life on five hundred is a vast improvement on life on two hundred. Life on a thousand a year is much easier and more satisfactory than life on five hundred. Life on five thousand is still simple enough, and offers more opportunities and better ones than life on one thousand, and brings more leisure and seems more desirable on many grounds. But then the consumption of superfluous luxuries has already begun, and possibly the point has already been passed that was coveted by the ancient who desired neither poverty nor riches. It would be a duller world if no one could spend more than five thousand a year, and far be such a condition from obtaining. Still, having even no more than that, there is no general certainty that increased expenditures will buy the money's worth; that they will make life more wholesome or more satisfying to the expenders; that they will promote health or the development of character, or cause love and peace any more to abound. Enough may not be as good as a feast. Indeed, it isn't. But, even if it consists merely of oatmeal and boiled eggs, it may easily be immensely better than a steady diet of feasting. Somewhere between a hundred dollars a year and unlimited means, money ceases to be a means of buying what is good for you and becomes an opportunity, which grows more and more difficult to improve as its size increases, until, if worse comes to worst, it may assume the proportions of an impossible task.

SINCE my brother Mundanus has become rich and famous as the author and autocrat of the Boot-Jack Trust, I have been very strongly tempted to stop working for myself and arrange with him for my support. It may be that I shall conclude that the habit of drudgery is too firmly fixed on me to be thrown off with impunity, so that perhaps I shall elect to go on working; but if I do, it will be in the nature of a self-indulgence, maintained for mere personal ease, against my conviction of what is just and right. For my argument is, and it is conceived on general and impersonal grounds, and founded without prejudice on dispassionate observation, that a comfortable maintenance without work is a very moderate set-off to any ordinary man for the inconvenience and detriment of having an immoderately successful brother. The reason lies in the incorrigible tendency of society to measure brothers by the same standard. When they are little, society puts them back to back and observes which is the taller. When they are grown, it piles their achievements or renown or incomes up side by side, and remarks which pile is bigger. Mr. Rockefeller's or Mr. Astor's income may run up into the millions, without making any one think the worse of my capacity; but ever since it became known that Mundanus was getting

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fifty thousand a year (largely payable in Boot-Jack stock, as I happen to know, but the public doesn't) it has been imputed to me as a fault, and somewhat of a disgrace, that my in-takings were not so large. It is so well understood as to be beyond argument or dispute, that in children of the same parents quite as much disparity of characteristics and abilities obtains as in persons who are not allied by blood. So also some brothers have a better education, or better opportunities, or better luck than others. Nevertheless, however conscientiously a man may have used the talents given him, and whatever honorable progress he may have made in life, if it be his misfortune to have a meteoric brother, who has sailed conspicuous where *he* has had to plod, and arrived glorious while *he* has sweated in patient aspiration, the slower-gaited man is bound to suffer as I do by disparaging comparison with his ocupod fellow of the same brood.

Lord Nelson had a brother, a clergyman, who might have passed down into a respectable obscurity but for a misfortune of birth which has lugged him into history as a person who, in spite of his breed, had no talent for fighting, and not even a reasonable regard for Lady Hamilton. William Nelson, however, at least inherited his brother Horatio's title and estates, and found in them, it is to be hoped, some compensation for the disparaging comparison from which he suffered. George Washington had a brother; but with the far-seeing consideration characteristic of a patriot-statesman, he buried him long before the Revolution. Lord Tennyson had a brother, who is best known to our time as that brother of the Laureate whose verse was not so good as Alfred's.

Analogous examples abound, some of them are so familiar that it would be indelicate to name them in print. What worthy and delightful men of our own day and nation have been overshadowed by the spreading renown of their brother great poet! What gifted and zealous the preachers are best identified to-day as brothers of some supreme genius of the pulpit! There are some families, to be sure, as the Washburnes, the Adamses, the Shermans, the Fields, or the Potters, in which an inheritance of talent and energy has been so evenly distributed that the whole race seemed to climb abreast out of the ruck of common humanity. Such brothers as these are in a fortunate case, and the credit of each one helps up the others. But far more commonly it happens that when high success visits a family at all it comes in a lump upon a single member. How reasonable it would be in such cases if the less fortunate members should lament the success of the lucky one, and lay his renown up against him! To the credit of human nature be it noted that it seems usually not to happen that way. The remarkable law which decrees that he who has shall have more, usually proves its power, and the successful brother, besides the material advantages that his achievements bring him, commonly enjoys an exaggerated share of the esteem and admiration of his own kin. My brother Mundanus, by his notorious success, has impaired my individuality. However hard I try, I can never hope hereafter to be known of men except as a brother of Mundanus of the Boot-Jack Trust. Yet I feel no resentment toward him. I rejoice in him, I am just as fond of him as ever, and proud of him besides. I make no effort to get out of his shadow. Our families still commune together, and it was only this morning that my eldest son suggested that my project of sending him to college was unwise, and that it would be vastly better for him to shelve his books and go down and strike his Uncle Mundanus for a job. I should prefer that Cato should go on with his studies, and shall so counsel him; but so far as his disposition to get something out of Mundanus is concerned, I am convinced that that is a sound instinct and based on equity.

THE lectures on Plato which Mr. Walter Pater, overcoming once again his native shyness toward print, has lately submitted to the public in a book, might have afforded the late M. Taine, had he lived to read them, that most exquisite of the delights of literature, a color or support to the reader's own theories.

Taine, as we know, came in early life under the Hegelian spell; and to realize what this means there is need only to remember that Hegel once said that only one

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man besides himself (I am not sure that he added even himself) understood him. For what witchery so potent as that of the philosophy which nobody understands! This Hegelian infatuation combining with a touch of the French pretension, which even Taine could not escape, that Reason finds herself perfectly at home only in Parisian attics and salons, made it easy for Taine to discover in the English a social inaptitude for philosophy. "Practical capacity and speculative incapacity" is his phrase regarding them, repeated under one and another form again and again. The English are "too positive;" in them "metaphysical liberty has perished under utilitarian preoccupation, and pantheistic revery under moral prejudices." Philosophy, and especially metaphysics, is as little indigenous with them as music and painting. They import it indeed; but in importing it "they leave the best part on the road. Carlyle was obliged to transform it into a mystical poetry, humorous and prophetic fancies; Hamilton touched upon it only to declare it chimerical; Stuart Mill, Buckle, only seized the most palpable part — a heavy residuum, positivism."

Of all English critics none has yielded himself more unreservedly to French influences than Mr. Pater. His manner is French decidedly, and his attitude not a little so. He then, if any, could be trusted to push through national limitations and pursue Reason in her utmost purity. But instead we find him apologizing—yes, apologizing!—for general ideas. "Abstruse, or intangible, or dry and seedy and wooden, as we may sometimes think them," they are, he in effect assures us, not so bad. Then, as if this condescension were not offence enough, he dares to speak with open disrespect of "Pure Being," pronouncing it definable only as "Pure Nothing." Moreover, without explicitly adopting it for his own, he notes with such a clear undertone of sympathy as to leave little doubt that it is his own, the objection to Plato, "that by sheer effectiveness of abstract language he gave an illusive air of reality or substance to the mere nonentities of metaphysic hypothesis —of a mind trying to feed itself on its own emptiness." For him, too, the doctrine that thought and being are one is "impossibly abstract;" and he casts contempt on the search—the search pursued "quixotically through what wastes of words!"—for the "true Substance, the One, the Absolute." It is "to the majority of acute minds," he believes, but the pursuit of zero, of "a mere algebraic symbol for nothingness." "An infectious mania, it might seem," he adds, "that strange passion for nonentity, to which the Greek was so oddly liable, to which the human mind generally might be thought to have been constitutionally predisposed."

If one is one's self in the full and free enjoyment of Mr. Pater's own racial deficiencies, one need see in all this no irrefragable proof of speculative incapacity. The refusal to identify thought with being, or to attach great value to Pure Substance, does not, one may then believe, necessarily disclose an irreparable want of metaphysical power. But the Hegelian atmosphere might be described as atmosphere in itself. Looked at through that, Mr. Pater's positivism must inevitably testify to an unspeculative nature. Yet even Taine would have had to concede to Mr. Pater a fine, rare skill in doing his work. Whatever the shortcomings of his metaphysic, Mr. Pater abounds in that "wavering sympathy," that "disinterested art," in which also Taine used to find the English lacking; and by virtue of these qualities in him these very lectures are become a specimen of that high literature incidentally described in them, a literature which "solicits a certain effort from the reader," but which promises "a great expressiveness on the part of the writer," if the reader "for his part will bring with him a great attentiveness." And we may add of the lectures, as Mr. Pater adds of the kind in general, "how satisfying, how reassuring, how flattering to himself after all, such work really is—the work which deals with one as a scholar, formed, mature, manly."

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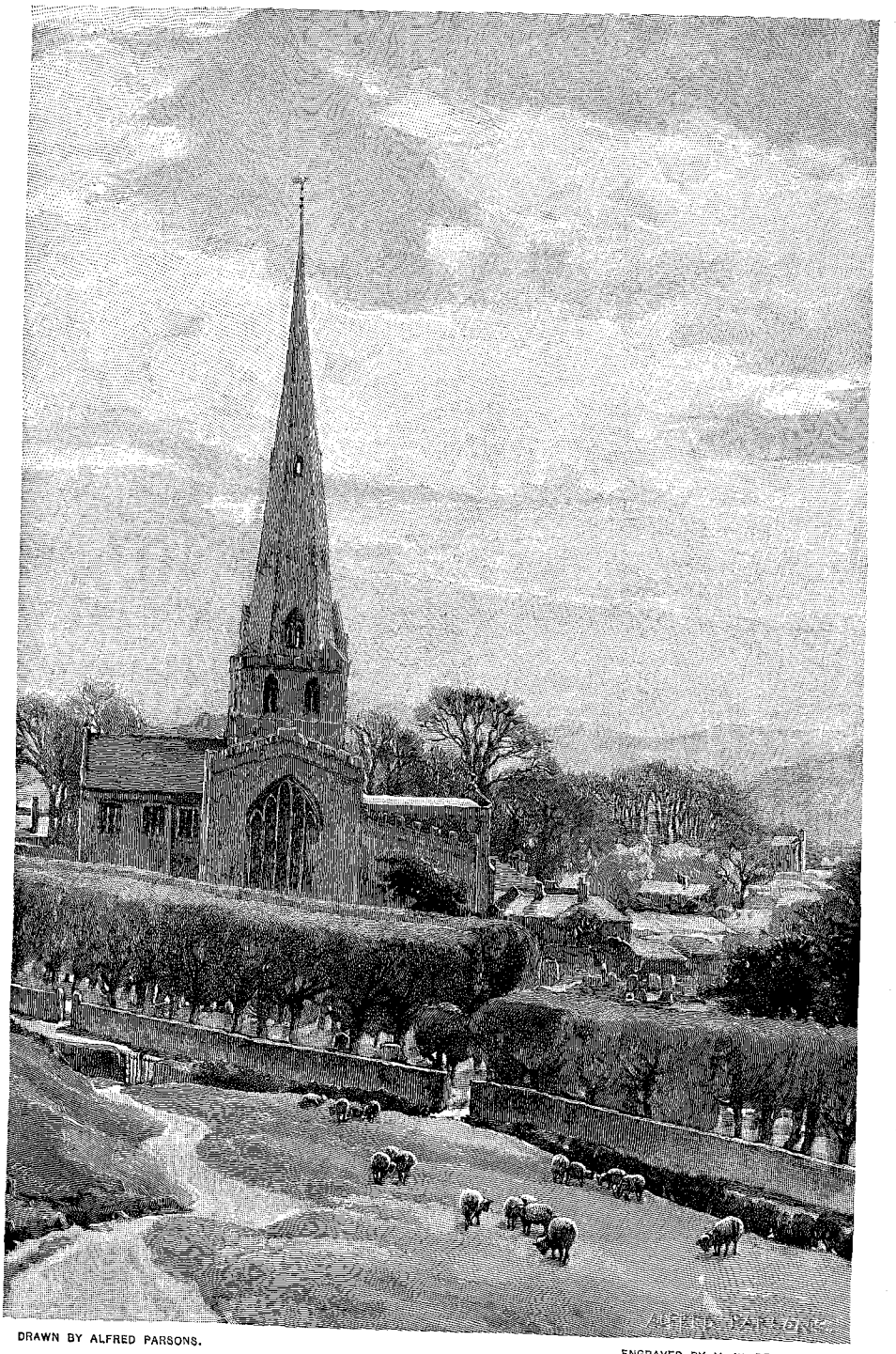

DRAWN BY ALFRED PARSONS.

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ASHBOURNE CHURCH.

(See Walton's "Complete Angler.")

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